

## Caṅkī Sutta

### The Caṅkī Discourse

[Belief, knowledge and liberation]

(Majjhima Nikāya 95/2:164-177)

Translated by Piya Tan ©2007

#### 1 Introduction

**1.1 CAṅKĪ.** Caṅkī is a *mahā,sāla* (“great-hall,” that is, rich and eminent) and learned brahmin of the Buddha’s time. Rajah Pasenadi of Kosala gave him **Opasāda** as a brahmadeya (a fief), where understandably he is the most prominent inhabitant. Opasāda is a prosperous well-populated town in Kosala, near which is a sal forest (*sāla,vana*), where offerings are often made to the devas; hence, it is also called “Deva Forest” (*deva,vana*).<sup>1</sup>

As a highly esteemed brahmin, Caṅkī is often mentioned together with other wealthy and eminent peers, such as Tārukkha, Pokkhara,sāti, Jāṇussoṇī and Todeyya (eg M 2:202), especially during brahmin gatherings, such as those Icchā,naṅgala (Sn p115) and at Manasākata (D 1:235). Like these leading brahmins, Caṅkī too is apparently aware of the kshatriya’s strict rules about purity of lineage.<sup>2</sup>

The Caṅkī Sutta describes how when the Buddha arrives at Opasāda, Caṅkī visits him, despite protests from other brahmins [§8a]. He replies that the Buddha too has all his brahminical qualities, but even more so, is of a thoroughly pure lineage going back many generations [§8b-9b].

From the Sutta, we surmise that at least 500 brahmins are with Caṅkī when he meets the Buddha, but nothing of their conversation is mentioned, except for a courteous exchange [§10]. However, Kāpaṭhika Māṇava, a learned 16-year-old brahmin becomes the protagonist when the Buddha answers his question which turns out to be an important instruction in the supremacy of knowledge over belief.

Although Buddhaghosa says that Caṅkī holds the Buddha in great esteem (as evident in the Sutta, anyway) (MA 3:416), we are not told whether he ever becomes a follower of the Buddha. However, from the plural form of the refuge-taking formula [§35], it is likely that he and the other brahmins present, led by Kāpaṭhika, go for refuge at the end of the Buddha’s instruction.

**1.2 THE SUTTA.** The Caṅkī Sutta opens with the Buddha and a large community of monks arriving in the prosperous brahmin village of Opasāda (or Opāsāda), which is Caṅkī’s brahmadeya [§2-3a]. Apparently the Buddha’s fame precedes him [§3bc], and the people there go in droves to visit him [§4]. Seeing this, the brahmin Caṅkī, too, is impressed and decides to see the Buddha, too [§§5-6].

Five hundred visiting brahmins discourage Caṅkī from doing so for fear of losing face, considering Caṅkī’s brahminical status [§7-8a], but Caṅkī thinks otherwise, replying that the Buddha too has all the brahminical qualities, but even more so, is of a thoroughly pure lineage going back many generations [§8b-9a]. Convinced, the other brahmins, too, decide to join Caṅkī [§9b].

During the brahmins’ meeting with the Buddha, the over-enthusiastic young Kāpaṭhika Māṇava can hardly wait to question the Buddha such that he is restrained by the Buddha himself [§10-12a]. When his turn comes, Kāpaṭhika asks a very important question: what does the Buddha think of the brahminical orthodoxy, that only the Vedas are true and all else false [§12b]. The Buddha points out that none of the brahmins living or dead ever had any direct knowledge of views proclaimed in the Vedas [§13], but Kāpaṭhika replies that the brahmins go *by faith and revelation* [§14a].

In his answer, the Buddha points out that faith and revelation are amongst the five grounds that are unsatisfactory as sources of valid knowledge [§14b]. How is the truth *preserved* then, asks Kāpaṭhika. The Buddha says that the truth is “preserved” as long as we accept a belief for what it is, that is, only as a provisional step to knowledge [§§15-16].

<sup>1</sup> MA 3:414.

<sup>2</sup> See **Ambaṭṭha S** (D 3.16/3:92 f) = SD 21.3 Intro 2.2.3.

When Kāpaṭhika goes on to ask how then do we *discover* the truth, the Buddha replies that a pupil should examine, that is, ascertain, a teacher's moral quality [§§16-19]. When a good teacher is found, the pupil should then apply a twelve-step learning process beginning with faith in the teacher [§§20-21b]. Finally, how is the truth *attained*? The Buddha answers by reversing the same twelve-step learning process, this time *ending* with faith, that is, wise faith [§21b-33].

Impressed, all the brahmins present go to the Buddha as their refuge, but not before apologizing for their negative opinion of the Buddha.

### 1.3 RELATED SUTTAS.

**1.3.1 Parallel passages.** In terms of narrative, the Caṅkī Sutta would have qualified as a sutta of the Dīgha Nikāya due to its somewhat propagandic tone: a learned and eminent brahmin visits the Buddha, who gives a lengthy discourse, and the brahmins are converted.<sup>3</sup> However, the Caṅkī Sutta has characteristically Dharma-centred teachings rather than an exciting debate or a fabulous recount of Buddhist mythology. Indeed, it is one of the most important statements on Buddhist epistemology, that is, on belief and knowledge.

Structurally, the Caṅkī Sutta closely parallels **the Soṇa,daṇḍa Sutta** (D 4). Both suttas open with the Buddha arriving in the locality with a large company of monks and are well received. In both cases, the most eminent local brahmin, both brahmadeya owners, want to meet the Buddha despite protests of their peers. In **the Caṅkī Sutta**, however, no conversation between him and the Buddha is recorded: it is the young **Kāpaṭhika Māṇava** who is the protagonist.

As for Soṇa,daṇḍa, he is initially reluctant to ask the Buddha anything for fear of saying the wrong thing, and so losing face! Indeed, at the end of the discourse, even after having gone for refuge, he tells the Buddha that he would only publicly show his respect to the Buddha in ways other than rising, so that he does not lose face before other brahmins! We seem to have a very status-conscious brahmin here.<sup>4</sup>

To put Soṇa,daṇḍa at ease, the Buddha asks him a familiar question: *what are the basic qualifications of a brahmin*, which he comfortably answers, but he also agrees with Buddha that moral virtue is superior to the external or social qualities of a brahmin. On Soṇa,daṇḍa's further question, the Buddha expounds the "fruits of recluship" (*sāmañña,phala*) to him (but no such teaching is given to Caṅkī or Kāpaṭhika). At the end of the Buddha's discourse, Soṇa,daṇḍa *alone* goes for refuge,<sup>5</sup> while in the case of the Caṅkī Sutta, the refuge formula is in the plural, meaning that there are others besides Kāpaṭhika who go for refuge.

There are also interesting similarities and departures between the Caṅkī Sutta and **the Ambaṭṭha Sutta** (D 3). Again, we see a similar opening: the Buddha visits, and his fame precedes him. In the case of the Ambaṭṭha Sutta, the eminent brahmin, **Pokkhara,sāti**, sends his young arrogant pupil Ambaṭṭha Māṇava to ascertain if the Buddha has all the 32 marks of the great man as generally believed. In this case, Ambaṭṭha is the *antagonist* rather than protagonist, around whom most of the teachings revolve (hence the Sutta title). And it is to Ambaṭṭha that the Buddha gives the *sāmañña,phala* teachings, but the distracted Ambaṭṭha actually leaves when the Buddha is prepared to go deeper into his teaching. Hence, like Pessa the elephant trainer's son,<sup>6</sup> Ambaṭṭha would have surely won some spiritual attainment if he were to stay on to listen to the Dharma.

In the Ambaṭṭha Sutta, however, it is Ambaṭṭha's teacher, Pokkhara,sāti, who approaches the Buddha and benefits from his teachings: indeed, he becomes a streamwinner, and along with his family and household (and probably Ambaṭṭha, too) goes for refuge.

**1.3.2 Samannesanā.** One of the key words of the Caṅkī Sutta is *samannesanā* ("examining, investigating") [§20]. The verb for this abstract noun is *samannesati* or *samanvesati* ("he seeks, looks for,

<sup>3</sup> See **Ambaṭṭha S** (D 3) = SD 21.3(2.1).

<sup>4</sup> But see **Soṇa,daṇḍa S** (D 4.26) = SD 30.5 Intro (2.2).

<sup>5</sup> D 4/1:111-126 = SD 30.5.

<sup>6</sup> In **Kandaraka S** (M 51), Pessa, the elephant trainer's son, leaves before the Buddha could finish his instruction on the 4 types of persons (in terms torturing self and others), but if he had stayed on to listen to the admonition, he would have become a streamwinner (M 51.4-7/1:340-342).

searches, examines, investigates”), which comes from *sam* (“together”) + *anvesati* (ie, *anu* + *esati*, “he seeks after or repeatedly”). This is the verb used in the following cases:

• Ambaṭṭha Sutta	Ambaṭṭha when <u>looks for</u> the Buddha’s marks	(D 2.2.11/1:105)
• Vīmaṁsaka Sutta	a monk <u>investigates</u> whether the Buddha is awakened	(M 47.2/1:317)
• Caṅkī Sutta	a disciple <u>investigates</u> a teacher’s moral virtue	(M 95.20/2:173)
• Brahmāyu Sutta	Brahmāyu <u>looks for</u> the Buddha’s marks	(M 91.6/2:135)
• Godhika Sutta	Māra <u>searches for</u> Godhika’s consciousness	(S 4.23/1:122)
• Moggallāna Sutta	Moggallāna <u>searches</u> the minds of others	(S 8.10/1:194)
• Vakkali Sutta	Māra <u>searches for</u> Vakkali’s consciousness	(S 22.87.39/3:124)
• Vīṇopama Sutta	a monk <u>looks for</u> the 5 aggregates	(S 35.246/4:197);

Of all the applications or usages of *samannesati* and its various forms, we find its spiritually most significant usage in the Caṅkī Sutta [§20], where the Buddha advises a pupil to investigate (*samannesati*) whether the teacher he intends to learn from has any greed, hate or delusion in his conduct. Only after he has observed (*samanupassati*) that the teacher’s conduct is free from the unwholesome roots, that he should then approach him, and so on. The verb *samanupassati* is more involved than merely seeing (*passati*), and is resolved as *sam* (“together”) + *anu* (“after, repeatedly”) + *passati* (“he sees”) (literally, “he sees with focus and repeatedly”).

## 2 Kāpaṭhika

**2.1 MĀṆAVA.** Young (including teenaged) but learned brahmins are called *māṇava* (literally, “mannikin,” “brahmin youth”), which means “descended from Manu” (the progenitor of man, that is, the first king of the earth, and the ideal man), the mythological ancestor of all humans.<sup>7</sup> However, *Māṇava* is used only for brahmin youths, but may also refer to any celibate brahmin expert, such as Piṅgiya *Māṇava*.<sup>8</sup> A digital search of the CST4 CD<sup>9</sup> yielded a total of 96 hits for *māṇavo* in the Dīgha and 79 in the Majjhima.<sup>10</sup> The *Mānavas* mentioned in the Pali Nikāyas are as follows:

<u>Teacher</u> <sup>11</sup>	<u>Mānava (pupil)</u>		
Brahma, jāla Sutta	Suppiya	Brahma, datta	(D 1.1/1:1)
Ambaṭṭha Sutta	Pokkhara, sāti	Ambaṭṭha	(D 3.1.3/1:88)
Soṇa, daṇḍa Sutta	Soṇa, daṇḍa (u)	Aṅgaka	(D 4.20/1:123)
(Ānanda) Subha Sutta	Todeyya (f)	Subha Todeyya, putta	(D 10.1.1/1:2043)
Te, vijja Sutta	Tārukka	Vāseṭṭha	(D 13.3/1:235)
Te, vijja Sutta	Pokkhara, sāti	Bhāra, dvāja	(D 13.3/1:235)
Mahā Govinda Sutta	Govinda (f)	Joti, pāla	(D 19.29/2:230)
Pāyāsi Sutta	Pārāsariya	Uttara	(D 23.32/2:354)
Aggañña Sutta	Tārukka	Vāseṭṭha	(D 27.2/3:80)
Aggañña Sutta	Pokkhara, sāti	Bhāra, dvāja	(D 27.2/3:80)
Ghaṭikāra Sutta	—	Jotipāla	(M 81.6/2:46)
Bodhi Rāja, kumāra	—	Sañjikā, putta	(M 85.3/2:91)
Brahmāyu Sutta	Brahmāyu	Uttara	(M 91.4/2:133)

<sup>7</sup> See eg Mahābharata bk 1: Ādi Parva: Sambhava Parva: Section 75. Cf Tha 720-724, where some young thieves are also called *māṇava*.

<sup>8</sup> Piṅgiya *Māṇava* is one of the 16 “youths” (*māṇava*) sent by the brahmin ascetic Bāvarī of Godhāvarī to meet the Buddha (Sn 1120-1123). He is 120 when he meets the Buddha (SnA 413).

<sup>9</sup> The Chaṭṭha Saṅgāyanā Tipiṭaka (4th ed) CD: <http://www.tipitaka.org/cst/blog/about/>.

<sup>10</sup> There are many other grammatical forms of *māṇava* occurring in the Pali texts; hence, the totals are very much higher than these two.

<sup>11</sup> Unless otherwise stated, the teacher is meant here; (f) = father; (u) = uncle.

Caṅkī Sutta	Caṅkī	Kāpaṭhika	(M 95.11/2:168)
Vāseṭṭha Sutta	Tārukka	Vāseṭṭha	(M 98.3/2:196 = Sn p115)
Vāseṭṭha Sutta (Brahma, vihāra) Subha Sutta	Pokkhara, sāti	Bhāra, dvāja	(M 98.3/2:196 = Sn p115)
Saṅgārava Sutta	Todeyya (f)	Subha Todeyya, putta	(M 99.2/2:196)
Cūla Kamma, vibhaṅga Sutta	[Bhāra, dvāja]	Saṅgārava	(M 100.3/2:209)
Indriya, bhāvanā Sutta	Todeyya (f)	Subha Todeyya, putta	(M 135.2/3:202)
Doṇa, pāka Sutta	Pārāsariya	Uttara	(M 152.2/3:298)
Sakka, nāma Sutta	—	Sudassana <sup>12</sup>	(S 3.13/1:81)
Soṇaka, yana Sutta	—	Magha	(S 11.12/1:229)
Māgha Sutta	—	Sonāka, yana	(A 4.233/2:232)
		Māgha	(Sn 3.5/p86)

Where teacher's name is given, the Māṇava is his pupil. Generally, this is the name (usually suffixed) referring to a youth before adulthood or marriagable age (mid-twenties).

**2.2 KĀPAṬHIKA MĀṆAVA.** In the Caṅkī Sutta, **Kāpaṭhika**,<sup>13</sup> Caṅkī's pupil, is described as being

...shaven-headed, sixteen years of age, a master of the Three Vedas, along with their invocations and rituals, phonology and etymology, and the Iti, hāsa Purāṇas<sup>14</sup> as the fifth; learned in the Vedic padas,<sup>15</sup> a grammarian,<sup>16</sup> and well versed in the Lokāyata [nature-lore]<sup>17</sup> and the marks of the great man.<sup>18</sup> [§11]

He is also said to be “a son of family, ... deeply learned, ... with a fine voice [the instrument of the Good Word], ... wise ... capable of discoursing with master Gotama” [§11]. Clearly, a boy prodigy!

While the Buddha and the brahmin elders are conversing, it appears that Kāpaṭhika can hardly wait to question the Buddha. The Buddha gently rebukes him and he then waits until the Buddha is ready for his questions. The Buddha addresses him as *Bhāradvāja*, evidently his gotra name. When the Buddha looks at Kāpaṭhika, the latter takes it as the cue for his turn to question the Buddha.

**2.3 KĀPAṬHIKA AND AMBAṬṬHA.** Both the brahmin youths Kāpaṭhika Māṇava (M 95) and Ambaṭṭha Māṇava (D 3) have a significant dialogue with the Buddha.<sup>19</sup> **Ambaṭṭha**, Pokkhara, sāti's pupil, is sent by his teacher to ascertain the Buddha's 32 superhuman marks, but turns out to be a very arrogant young brahmin who meets the Buddha simply to carry out his instructions and, in the process, blatantly disrespects the Buddha (such as calling him a “menial,” *ibbha*). In fact, the Buddha has to resort to various skillful means to tame the haughty youth, such as saying that Ambaṭṭha's head would shatter if does not answer a key question.<sup>20</sup>

**Kāpaṭhika**, too, initially appears to be rude in constantly interrupting the conversation between the Buddha and the elderly brahmins. However, after the Buddha rebukes him, he defers until the right time to question the Buddha. It is clear from the nature of the ensuing dialogue [§§12b-33], which forms the

<sup>12</sup> Called Uttara at DhA 23.4/4:17.

<sup>13</sup> Be Ce Ee Kāpaṭhika; Ke Se Kāpadika. The Mūla, sarvāsti, vāda version seems to have titled it as Kāmaṭhika Sūtra: see scholium (*uddāna*) in fragm 299 V3 in Hartmann 2000:363, which has *maṭhikaḥ*.

<sup>14</sup> Iti, hāsa Purāṇas are the oral tradition of brahminical legends of kings and sages.

<sup>15</sup> *Padako veyyākaraṇo*, ie, well versed in the *pada, pāṭha* of Sanskrit grammar. Technically, this refers to the *pada* (or literal, word for word) method of reciting (or writing) Veda sentences, ie, “a method of arranging each word of a Vedic text separately in its original form [cf *pada*] without regard to the rules of [sandhi]; cf *krama-* and *samhitā-pāṭha*.” (SED). By itself, *pada* can here be translated as “word or word structure.”

<sup>16</sup> On *veyyākaraṇa*, see BHSD: sv *vyākaraṇa* = *vaiyākaraṇa* (p517).

<sup>17</sup> *Lokāyata*. This seems to be the early meaning of the term. Its reference of the materialistic philosophy of Cārvāka is apparently later: see Rhys Davids, D:RD 1:166-172. See **Lokāyatikā Brāhmaṇā S** (A 9.38/4:428-432) = SD 35.15. See also Jayatilleke 1963:48-58 (§§55-67).

<sup>18</sup> For details, see **Buddhānussati** = SD 15.7(4.1)n.

<sup>19</sup> On Ambaṭṭha Māṇava, see **Ambaṭṭha S** (D 3/1:87-110) = SD 21.3 esp Intro (1.3.2).

<sup>20</sup> D 3.1.20-21/3:95 = SD 21.3.

significant bulk of the Caṅkī Sutta, that he is simply being *irrepressible* rather rude. In fact, at the end of the dialogue, Kāpaṭhika goes for refuges and apologizes to the Buddha for his erstwhile low opinion of ascetics [§34].

Ambaṭṭha does not stay on to listen to Buddha's admonition despite his invitation to do so, and does not apologize for his earlier rudeness. In fact, he seems almost unrepentant and eager to leave once his mission is accomplished. Despite all this, the Buddha's teachings to Ambaṭṭha is much longer than that to Kāpaṭhika. However, the whole lesson is not wasted, as Ambaṭṭha conveys it verbatim to his teacher, Pokkhara,sāti, who is impressed, and like Caṅkī (probably) [1.1], goes for refuge. In fact, Pokkhara,sāti becomes a streamwinner.

### 3 The five grounds for views

**3.1 KĀPAṬHIKA'S QUESTION.** Although the sutta is named after the brahmin Caṅkī, the protagonist clearly is the young Kāpaṭhika Māṇava [§§10-12a]. As noted by IB Horner, the sutta is only "prompted by Caṅkī" (M:H 2:354). The highlight of the Caṅkī Sutta is clearly the interesting dialogue between the Buddha and Kāpaṭhika Māṇava, who "has mastered the Vedic scripture" (*tevijjake pāvacane katam*)<sup>21</sup> [§§12b-33].

Kāpaṭhika wishes to know the Buddha's view on the brahmins' "categorical claim that only this is true, all else is false" (*ekamsena niṭṭham gacchanti, idam eva saccam mogham aññam*) regarding the Vedic texts (*manta,pada*) [§12b]. As in **the Tevijja Sutta** (D 13), the Buddha replies that

- (1) neither the brahmins,
- (2) nor their teachers' teachers as far back as seven generations or more,
- (3) nor even the "the ancient seers [rishis] of the brahmins, mantra makers, mantra preachers" (*pubbakā isayo mantānam kattāro mantānam pavattāro*),

claimed direct knowledge of the truth of their statements, that "I know this, I see this: only this is true, everything else is false!" (*aham etaṃ jānāmi, aham etaṃ passāmi, idam me saccam mogha, aññam*) [§13abc].<sup>22</sup> Like the evangelistic zealots of today who claim only their God is true, all else false, none of these Brahma-believing brahmins have met or seen "God": none of them have any direct knowledge of God. Such being the case, the brahmins follow a "blind lineage" (*andha,veṇi*) and their faith in these categorical statements is "rootless [baseless]" (*amūlika*).

Kāpaṭhika replies that the brahmins do not rely on faith alone, but also on "repeated hearing," that is, the oral tradition (*anussava*), or, as Jayatilleke puts it, "out of faith in a sacred, holy or revelational tradition."<sup>23</sup> In other words, like the book-based evangelists of today, they claim that "our holy book says so!"<sup>24</sup>

The Buddha replies that Kāpaṭhika first says one thing ("faith"), and then another ("repeated hearing"): Kāpaṭhika does not seem to be sure of his stand! The Buddha goes on to list five grounds [3] on which a view can arise, but since none of them is based on direct knowing, then there are these two possible outcomes:

- (1) the view is well-received but false;
- (2) a rejected view may turn out to be true.

In other words, a view may turn out to be either true or false. In either case, it is *not* direct personal knowledge. It is not so because we have not personally experienced the truth for ourselves, but merely accept it on faith, or we simply like the idea, or have heard it (by hearsay), or have reasoned it out, or accepted it after some reflection.

**3.2 THE NATURE OF LANGUAGE.** Let me here introduce a simple Buddhist philosophy of language so that we can have a useful and practical discussion here. There are three levels or dimensions of lang-

<sup>21</sup> "Scripture" is used here noting well that the Vedas them were an oral tradition.

<sup>22</sup> This is brief answer: for a more elaborate answer, see **Te,vijja S** (D 13.12-29/1:238-246) = SD 1.8.

<sup>23</sup> Jayatilleke 1963: 170-188, esp 177.

<sup>24</sup> On book-based and truth-based religion, see **Koṭṭhika S** (S 35.232) = SD 28.4.

uage: open language, private language and metalanguage.<sup>25</sup> By “**open language**” I mean the kind of words and expressions we use in daily communication, ranging from our friendly chat with friends to newspaper articles to novels. “**Private language**” is simply technical language, where words, symbols, sounds and gestures have meanings have to be learned, and are not immediately apparent to the uninitiated. This is the languages of science and of religion.

Finally, we have “**metalanguage**,” which is the use of language, symbols, sounds and gestures to point to the nature and content of spiritual experience. In a sense, this is the most “private” of languages, it can only be understood between teacher and pupil, and is not written language, although such written forms may be understood on a higher level by one with spiritual insight. More importantly, metalanguage is *liberating*: it makes us understand the true spiritual intentions of the words (especially of the suttas and teachings) so that we are spiritually liberated.

**3.3 THE FIVE GROUNDS.** The five grounds (*pañca dhamma*) for forming an opinion or accepting one are as follows, that is, we tend to form views or accept them (arriving at a conviction) through:<sup>26</sup>

- |                                                                                                   |                                              |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| (1) faith                                                                                         | ( <i>saddhā</i> ),                           |
| (2) personal preference                                                                           | ( <i>ruci</i> ),                             |
| (3) repeated hearing                                                                              | ( <i>anussava</i> ),                         |
| (4) reasoned thought [specious reasoning]                                                         | ( <i>ākāra, parivitakka</i> ), and           |
| (5) being convinced of a view after pondering<br>over it [conviction to a view after thinking it] | ( <i>diṭṭhi, nijjhāna-k, khanti</i> ). [§14] |

**Bhikkhu Bodhi** comments that

Of these five grounds for arriving at a conviction, the first two seem to be primarily emotive, the third to be a blind acceptance of tradition, and the last two primarily rational or cognitive. The “two different ways” each may turn out are true and false [sic]. (M:ÑB 1300 n884)

In the **Saṅgārava Sutta** (M 100), the Buddha summarizes the various religious thinkers into three kinds, namely:<sup>27</sup>

- (1) **The traditionalists** (*anussavikā*), who, on the basis of oral tradition (*anussava*), proclaim the fundamentals of the holy life after they have reached the consummation and perfection of direct knowledge here and now. The traditionalists derive their knowledge and claims wholly from divine revelation, scriptural tradition and interpretations based on it. Prominent amongst the traditionalists are the brahmins who upheld the authority of the Vedas (as stated by Kāpaṭhika here).
- (2) **The rationalists and speculators [metaphysicians]** (*takkī vīmaṁsī*), who base their views entirely on mere faith. Using reasoning and speculating to reinforce that faith, they proclaim their dogmas and ideas. The rationalists derive their knowledge and claims through reasoning and speculations without any claim to extrasensory perception. The speculators of the early Upaniṣads, the skeptics, the materialists and most of the Ājīvakas come under this class.
- (3) **The experientialists**, who, in things not heard before, having directly known the Dharma for themselves (*sāmaṁ yeva dhammaṁ abhiññāya*),<sup>28</sup> proclaim the fundamentals of the holy life

<sup>25</sup> Although these may look familiarly philosophical terms, I am not basing my ideas here on such terms, but they may overlap in places.

<sup>26</sup> For details, see below here. A more comprehensive discussion on these 5 grounds is found in **Kesa,puttiya S** (A 3.65/1:188-193) = SD 35.4a. The most comprehensive list of views is of course found in **Brahma,jāla S** (D 1/1:1-46) = SD 25.

<sup>27</sup> M 100.7/2:211 = SD 10.9 Intro (2.1).

<sup>28</sup> This phrase, notes Bodhi, “emphasizes direct personal realization as the foundation for promulgating a holy life.” (M:ÑB 1304 920).

after they have reached the consummation and perfection of direct knowledge here and now. The experientialists depend on direct personal knowledge and experience, including extra-sensory perception on the basis of which their theories are founded. Many of the thinkers of the middle and late Upaniṣads, some of the Ājīvakas and Jains can be put in this class. The materialists, as empiricists (those who advocate reality as known only through personal experience, that is, the senses), may also be classed here, “if not for the fact that they denied the validity of claims to extrasensory perception.”<sup>29</sup>

The Buddha, due to his personal direct experience of true reality here and now, declares himself to be a teacher in this category. It is clear from this that knowledge is not only radically different from belief, but that knowledge (which is always true) is far superior to belief (which, after all, may turn out to be either true or false).

**(1) Conviction through faith (*saddhā*).** All religions, by definition, make use of religious language, and such language mostly does not make sense outside the religion, except by way of popular expressions which however mostly assume new, often non-religious, senses.<sup>30</sup> The theistic religions generally tend to take the word (*logos*) of their scripture literally.<sup>31</sup> In an important way, **modern-day brahmanism**, as found in the God-centred ideas of biblical or fundamentalist Christianity, namely that *logos* (the word) = *theos* (God), poses an insurmountable problem for a Christian thinker and teacher. Simply put, God (however defined) is *reified* into the word of scripture.

No matter how well divinity may be *expressed* into language or words, it can never be *understood* in all its reality, not even its essence, (assuming the expressing is about divinity at all). Each listener will somehow construct his own version of the *logos* or scriptural word (whether in print or by sound). The listener can only make sense of the *logos* when he is able to *experience* it in his own life.

Now comes another problem: not all personal experiences reflect divinity, much less reality. We are always constructing our own very private and limited realities: even right now as you read these words, you are most likely forming your own version of what I am trying to say here! Most, if not all, of our present experience of the world is nothing but a superimposition of our past (feelings, knowledge, memories, views, and impressions) onto the present moment of reality.

Understandably, in such systems, **faith** (*saddhā*) works very well, as there is no “sensible” way of explaining why we “like” certain experiences, and “dislike” others. This kind of faith is not just religious belief, but encompasses all our likings and desires, that is, what we effectively regard as our “religion” or “faith.” This kind of faith is said to be “unrooted” or “baseless” (*amūlika*) because it is not based on the true experience of reality. It is based on a *constructed* formation (*saṅkhāra*) of what we see as satisfactory and pleasurable in our sense-experiences.

Once we sense that an experience is satisfactory or pleasurable, our minds bombard it with an explosion of countless thoughts (*papañca*).<sup>32</sup> We lose ourselves in such proliferated thoughts of ecstasy or divinity (the two often overlap), which convinces us even more so of the “truth” of our beliefs. We even mistake such “experiences” as the *power* of divinity—we have mistaken power for truth, and made *politics* of spirituality. Understandably, all theistic religions have political inclinations and are likely to desire

<sup>29</sup> Jayatilleke, *Early Buddhist Theory of Knowledge*, 1963:170.

<sup>30</sup> An example is “an eye for an eye” (Hebrew עין תחת עין), from the Bible (Exodus 21:23–27), a notion that originated from the Code of Hammurabi (c1760 BCE). The saying is generally used to meaning anything from a literal *lex talionis* to *mirror justice* (the punishment that fits the crime), or simply “tit for tat.” Mahatma Gandhi contributed his own insightful retort: “An eye for an eye make the whole world blind.”

<sup>31</sup> “[Heraclitus](#) established the term in Western philosophy as meaning both the source and fundamental order of the cosmos. The [sophists](#) used the term to mean [discourse](#), and [Aristotle](#) applied the term to argument from reason. After Judaism came under [Hellenistic influence](#), [Philo](#) adopted the term into Jewish philosophy. The Gospel of John identifies Jesus as the incarnation of the Logos, through which all things are made. The gospel further identifies the Logos as God (*theos*), providing scriptural support for the trinity. It is this sense, the Logos as Jesus Christ and God, that is most common in popular culture.” (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Logos>)

<sup>32</sup> See eg **Madhu,piṇḍika S** (M 18/1:108-114) = SD 6.14.

to overpower those who are non-believers, or those who are different. It is often unpleasant and disempowering to be reminded that there are those who do not share our own feelings.

The most important application of *saddhā* in early Buddhism is in the form of the verbal clause, *nijjhānaṃ khamanti*, “they accept after pondering over it” or “they reflectively accept it,” is found in **the (Anicca) Cakkhu Sutta** (S 25.1) (and the other nine suttas in the same chapter) in this passage on the faith-follower (*saddhā’nusārī*):

Bhikkhus, those who have faith thus (*saddahati*), who firmly believes in these truths [is convinced of these truths], is called a “**faith-follower**.”

He has entered the fixed course of rightness,<sup>33</sup> entered the plane of true individuals,<sup>34</sup> gone beyond the plane of the worldlings.<sup>35</sup>

He is incapable of doing any intentional deed by which he might be reborn in hell, or in the animal world, or in the ghost realm. He is incapable of dying without attaining the fruit of streamwinning.<sup>36</sup> (S 25.1.4/3:225) = SD 16.7

Here we see the use of “have faith” (*saddahati*) in a positive sense, that is, in connection with the attainment of streamwinning in this life itself, that is, by way of constantly practising the perception of impermanence (*anicca,saññā*).<sup>37</sup> This is the first of two ways of attaining streamwinning are described in the (Anicca) Cakkhu Sutta. In this case, the practitioner relies on his faculty of faith (*saddh’indriya*)<sup>38</sup> to practise the perception of impermanence and as such guarantees himself the attaining of streamwinning in this life itself. The first is that of the truth-follower (*dhammānusārī*) [see (5) below].

**(2) Conviction through personal preference (*ruṇi*).** There is a very important reason why I mention “feelings” (*vedanā*) here. All theistic notions, indeed *all religious ideas based on some notion of an abiding entity*, such as a soul, spirit, etc, are rooted in sensing (*phassa*) and feelings (*vedanā*), that is, the five physical sense-experiences interpreted by the mind. Through our five physical sense-experiences, we react to sense-data in any of three ways, regarding them as pleasant, unpleasant or neutral.

Those experiences that we “like” arise from a habitual familiarity with them from our long past. Those experiences that we “dislike” tend to be that which counter what we regard as “pleasant.” And what we do not understand or makes “sense” to us, we ignore as they appear “neutral” or “boring” (neither pleasant nor unpleasant) to us. In this way, our ignorance is fed and perpetuated, and our world is that of a *duality* between collecting what we like and pushing away what we dislike.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>33</sup> Comy explains this as the noble path (*ariya.magga*) (SA 2:346). On the clause, “he is incapable of dying without having attained the fruit of streamwinning,” SA says that once the path has arisen there can be no obstruction to the fruit. It quotes **Puggala Paññatti**, where such a saint is called an “aeon-stopper” (*thita,kappī*): “Should this person, practising for the realization of the fruit of streamwinning, and it were the time for the burning-up of the aeon, it would not burn up until that person realizes the fruit of streamwinning.” (Pug 1.20/13)

<sup>34</sup> “True individuals,” *sappurisa*, also “superior persons,” “virtuous person,” “ideal person”; often syn with “noble disciple,” *ariya,sāvaka*, but here clearly includes those, although not yet on the path, but is assured of it, viz the faith-follower and the truth-follower. The qualities of the *sappurisa* are given at D 33.2.2(6)/3:252, 34.1.8(7)/3:283; M 113; A 7.64/4:113, 8:38/4:144 f & at M 110.14-24/3:23 f.

<sup>35</sup> “Worldling,” *puthujjano*, ie “born of the crowd”; more fully called “uninstructed worldling,” one unskilled (*akovida*), ie, lacks theoretical knowledge of the Dharma, and is undisciplined (*avinīta*), and also lacks practical training in the Dharma. He is not a “seer of the noble ones” (*ariya,dassavī*), ie, of the Buddha and the noble disciples (the saints), because he lacks the wisdom-eye that discerns the truth they have seen. “Noble ones” (*ariya*) and “true individuals” (*sappurisa*) are synonymous. See also MA 1:20-25; SA 2:98-101, 2:251 f; AA 1:61-63; Nc 75-78; Pm 2:445-449; DhsA 348-354.

<sup>36</sup> *Abhabbo taṃ kammaṃ kātuṃ yaṃ kammaṃ katvā nirayaṃ vā tiracchāna.yoniṃ vā petti,visayaṃ vā uppajjeyya. Abhabbo ca tāva kālaṃ kātuṃ yāva na sotāpatti,phalaṃ sacchikaroti.*

<sup>37</sup> S 25.1.5/3:225 = SD 16.7 Intro (5).

<sup>38</sup> See **Āpaṇa S** (S 48.50/5:225 f) = SD 10.4.

<sup>39</sup> This is in fact the essence of the teachings of **Brahma,jāla S** (D 1), especially its closing sections (D 1.105-149/39-46) = SD 25.



This clearly explains why we tend to *believe* in people and things that are pleasurable or associated with pleasurable sensations. Moved by such a belief, we tend to attribute charisma (abilities, attractiveness, and power) to such individuals, who effectively become idols, that is, entities with certain projected and fixed qualities we approve of (usually that which we lack and find desirable).<sup>40</sup>

In a peculiar but not uncommon scenario, even pain may be viewed as pleasurable—which would of course be a perversion of perception, of thought and of view.<sup>41</sup> The way we *perceive* things fuels how we *think* about ourselves, others and the world, and if this continues, we form strong *views* about ourselves, others and the world. In this sense, we are all unhatched eggs enclosed in shells of personal preferences.<sup>42</sup>

**(3) Conviction through repeated hearing (*anussava*).** Faith, that is, blind faith (*amūlika saddhā*), cannot thrive in an ambience of questioning and creativity. Faith thrives on habitual tendencies, a permanent presence of the familiar: the group becomes more important than the individual. Any nail that sticks out needs to be hammered back in. This is the purpose of “repeated hearing” (*anussava*) in such a system. “Repeated hearing” is a favourite means of perpetuating the official teachings of a cult, that is, a closed group whose final authority is a living teacher, who is in some sense deified or endowed with charisma. A cult would understandably not admit itself to be one, but its unmistakable main characteristics are:<sup>43</sup>

1. The final authority on teachings is centred around a single living (usually charismatic) individual.
2. The cult regards that it is the only “true” community or has the only “true” teachings, while “all else is false.”
3. There are effectively no individuals in a cult, only like-minded group members.

WAS EARLY BUDDHISM A CULT? If we discount (3), early Buddhism might be considered a “cult,” since the Buddha, while he lives, is the first and final authority, and that the Dharma is against the current (*paṭisota, gāmi*)<sup>44</sup> of the world is “false.” However, the Buddha clearly does not see himself as a cult leader, nor would he endorse one. Two important statements by the Buddha support this. **The Gārava Sutta** (S 6.2) records how almost immediately after the Great Awakening, the Buddha declares that it is the Dharma he himself respects.<sup>45</sup> And in his last days, the Buddha declares that we should take ourselves as “refuge” (as the source of mindfulness and awakening), and in no one and nowhere else.<sup>46</sup>

Although the Buddha declares that the “world” is false, he does not deny the possible of goodness and happiness here and now. Numerous teachings are given to lay followers on how to enjoy the best of both this world and spirituality.<sup>47</sup> The Sangha or “spiritual community” is never pitched as being the only “true community” as against the world, but that such a spiritual community provides the ideal conditions to expedite awakening from the sleep of suffering, that is, for cultivating liberating wisdom. Whether one is a lay person (man or woman) or a monastic, the opportunity for spiritual awakening in this life is the same for all, and is simply a matter of personal choice and effort.<sup>48</sup>

Although Buddhism places great value on “listening” (*suta*), which is synonymous with “learning,” this is only a first stage in the gradual process [5; §20]. Questioning (*paṭipucchā*) is a vital part of personal education.<sup>49</sup> Proper attention (*yoniso, manasikāra*)<sup>50</sup> and mental investigation (*dhamma, vicaya*)<sup>51</sup> are

<sup>40</sup> See also “**I**”: the Nature of Identity = SD 19.1 esp (6.2, 6.3, 6.5); “**Me**”: the Nature of Conceit = SD 19.2a esp (6.5).

<sup>41</sup> On the perversions, see **Satipaṭṭhāna Ss** = SD 13.1 (4.1a) & **Vipallāsa S** (A 4.49/2:52; Vism 22.68) = SD 16.11.

<sup>42</sup> See also “**Mine**”: the Nature of Craving = SD 19.3 esp (3).

<sup>43</sup> On the application of *anussava* to the Vedas, see Jayatilleka 1963:177 f. See also “**Me**”: the Nature of Conceit = SD 19.2a esp (3.2.1). For refs, see: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cult>.

<sup>44</sup> A 4.5/2:5; Pug 4.27/8.

<sup>45</sup> S 6.2/1:138-140 = SD 12.3.

<sup>46</sup> **Mahā, parinibbāna S** (D 16.2.26/2:100) = SD 9; also at S 3:42 f, 5:163, 164 (at different venues).

<sup>47</sup> The best known at **Sigāl’ovāda S** (D 31/3:189-193 = SD 4.1) on social ethics and the lay follower’s welfare, **Dīgha, jānu S** (A 8.54/4:280 = SD 5.10) on worldly and spiritual happiness, and **Ādiya S** (A 5.41/3:44 = SD 2.1) on how to truly enjoy your wealth.

<sup>48</sup> See eg the 10 suttas of S 25/3:225-228, on the ease of gaining awakening in this life itself.

<sup>49</sup> See: (**Paṭipucchā**) **Parisa S**, on being trained in questioning (*paṭipucchā*), not in vain talk (*ukkācīta*) (A 2.5.-6/72 f); **Kathā, vatthu S**, the 4 ways of answering a question (A 3.67.2/1:197).

essential aspects of the path towards spiritual awakening. What is frowned on is taking “repeated hearing” alone as the only valid source of knowledge and truth.

“Repeated hearing” (*anussava*) as a satisfactory source of knowledge is elaborately refuted by Ānanda in **the Sandaka Sutta** (M 76). Ānanda explains that the second of the religions that are unsatisfactory but not necessarily false if said to be one based on repeated hearing. Here, any of at least three possible meanings of *anussava*—divine revelation (including prophecy), traditional dogmas (scriptural authority) and report (“witnessing”)—is applicable. *Anussava*-based beliefs could have been based on some historical event, but they could have been poorly remembered, with lapses of memory in between.<sup>52</sup>

THE KAKURE KIRISHITANS OF JAPAN. An excellent example here is that of the Kakure Kirishitans (“Hidden Christians”) of Japan. In the 17th century, when Catholic colonialism and missionary activities went hand in glove, the Roman pope divided the world into two exclusive spheres of influence for trade, colonization and evangelization. In 1549, Francis Xavier landed in Kagoshima, Japan, and began the Christian evangelization of Japan. The Tokugawa shogunate, aware of the Christian intentions of colonizing Japan, introduced effective measures against them, banning them in 1614. The Japanese who remained loyal to the foreign faith went underground.

The underground Christians worshipped in secret rooms in private homes led by lay leaders. The figures of the Virgin Mary and saints were made to look like traditional Buddha images and Shinto deities. Their prayers were adapted to sound like Buddhist or Shinto chants, but keeping many original words from Latin, Portuguese and Spanish, but errors inevitably crept in over the centuries. The Bible was passed down orally, due to fears that printed texts would be confiscated by the authorities and their group persecuted, but it too became Kirishitanized over time [see news articles excerpt below]. In many cases, the communities drifted from Western Catholicism, so that their prayers and faith became an ancestral cult, venerating the Christian martyrs.<sup>53</sup>

In 1865, when Japan opened its doors again to the west, some 60,000 Kakure Kirishitan came out of hiding, with the greatest pocket (some 20,000) in Nagasaki. Through re-education, some of them officially returned to the Catholic Church, but others, called Hanare Kirishitan (“Separated Christians”), remained apart, retaining their traditional beliefs. Their descendants today generally regard themselves as neither Christian nor Buddhist, and assert that they are simply keeping to their ancestral faith.<sup>54</sup>

*The New York Times* (3 April 1997), in an article by Nicholas D Kristof, entitled “Lack of Oppression Hurts Christianity in Japan,”<sup>55</sup> gives this interesting report (excerpts):

“I have a Buddhist altar and Shinto shrine in my house,” said Tomeichi Oka, a genial Hidden Christian pastor, as he knelt on the tatami floor of his living room. “In the old days that was just for camouflage, because our Christianity was hidden, but now I believe in the other gods as well.”

This acceptance of other religious beliefs is common in Japan; most Japanese identify themselves as followers of both Buddhism and Shintoism. But this pantheism has led to tensions between the Hidden Christians and those Japanese who in modern times have converted to Catholic or Protestant churches.

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<sup>50</sup> That is, the constant reflection on the impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and not-self characteristics of all existence: see **Sampasādiya S** (D 28.13/3:107 = SD 14.14); **Upavāṇa S** (S 46.8/5:76).

<sup>51</sup> See **(Bojjhaṅga) Sila S** (S 46.3/5:67-70) = SD 10.15(5).

<sup>52</sup> See Jayatilleke 1963:184 f.

<sup>53</sup> See [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kakure\\_Kirishitan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kakure_Kirishitan).

<sup>54</sup> See <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kirishitan>.

<sup>55</sup> The title is explained by Kristof’s remark that “Back in the 1500s, Christianity spread rapidly in Japan, until a fierce repression began 400 years ago this spring [1997]. That sent believers into hiding, and these Hidden Christians, as they are called, survived hundreds of years of torture and executions with their faith intact. Yet now believers say their ranks are shrinking [from 90% of the remote Ikitsuki island to just over 10%] under more insidious pressures: televisions, cars and video games.”

Because of the centuries of persecution, the Hidden Christians have no tradition of churches or public displays of their faith, although some have crucifixes that were secretly handed down from generation to generation.

When someone dies, a public Buddhist funeral is held, and then the Christians secretly gather to chant prayers—often in Latin, still recognizable despite mistakes introduced over the centuries. “After the Buddhist funeral is held, we tell our God that it was all a mistake,” Oka said. “And then we hold the Christian funeral and sing the Christian hymns.”

The doctrine of the Hidden Christians is a fascinating example of how a religious faith can evolve to match local ideas and history. For example, the bible of the Hidden Christians, published last year [1996] in English as “The Beginning of Heaven and Earth” (University of Hawaii Press), describes not a great flood but a sudden tsunami, and the Noah-like figure survives not in an ark but in a canoe.

Mary is a 12-year-old girl from the Philippines who studies hard, turns down a proposal from the Philippine king and apparently visits Japan. Holy Sacrament is the name of a tutor for Jesus, the chief disciple is the pope, and Jesus is betrayed by Judas, “who eats his rice with soup every morning.”

Later, the Crucifixion is arranged not by Pontius Pilate but by two different men, Ponsha and Piloto. (The New York Times, 3 April 1997) <http://www.samsloan.com/japan-ch.htm>

*The Time Magazine* (11 January 1982), in its article on “Japan’s Crypto-Christians,” gives another fascinating example of such a religious “evolution”:

Because their prayers and rituals had to be transmitted secretly among illiterate peasants, they slowly became garbled. Over the years the words were repeated while the meaning was forgotten, though some prayers retained a discernible Latin antecedent: “Ame Maria karassa binno domisu terikobintsu . . .” obviously derives from “Ave Maria gratia plena dominus tecum benedicta . . .” (<http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,925197,00.html>)<sup>56</sup>

Similar phonetic changes are common occur in Buddhism, too. The best known is perhaps that of the Sanskrit *om maṇi padme hūm* into the Tibetan form, *om mani pémé hung*, where we see *padme* assimilated into *pémé*. More common are the phonetic changes found in the peculiar ways that the Sinhalese, the Thai and the Mynmarese pronounce Pali. Take for example pronunciation of the first refuge:

Sinhalese:	bud.dhang sa.ra.nang gac.chaa.mi
Myanmarese:	bou.dang tha.ra.nang ge.zaa.mi
Thai:	phut.thang sa'.ra'.nang gat'.chaa.mi' [an apostrophe (') represents a glottal stop]

In 2007, at a National University of Singapore Buddhist Society sutta study group meeting, after our chanting of the Vandana and the Tisarana “Singapore” style (close to the Indian sounds), a Myanmarese freshman (one of a nearly dozen nationalities present) asked me, “Why do we chant differently from the Myanmar style?” “There is no one right way,” I replied. “It depends where you live or come from.”

<sup>56</sup> Here is a fuller comparison of the passage showing the corrupted Japanese Latin:

<u>Original Church Latin</u>	<u>Kakure Kirishitan</u>	<u>English translation</u>
Ave Maria, gratia plena,	Ame Mariya karassa binno	Hail Mary, full of grace,
Dominus tecum, benedicta	domisu terikobintsu	The Lord is with you, blessed
tu in mulieribus, et benedictus	tsuwaeshi moedebesu esu berentsu	are you among women and blessed
fructus ventris tui, Jesus.	furutsu bentsutsutsu instu.	the fruit of your womb, Jesus.

See also James Brooke’s “Ikitsuki Journal; Once Banned, Christianity Withers in an Old Stronghold,” [NY Times, 25 Dec 2003](http://www.nytimes.com/2003/12/23/nytimes/23japan.html); also Michael Hoffman, “From Bliss to Blood,” [The Japan Times, 23 Dec 2007](http://www.japantimes.com/2007/12/23/23japan.html).

**(4) Conviction through reasoned thought (*ākāra, parivittakka*).** The Pali dictionaries we have today,<sup>57</sup> generally give two meanings of *ākāra* applicable here:

1. form, appearance, external characteristic, distinctive property, mark, deceptive appearance, hint;
2. reason, cause, ground, account, motive, purpose, object.

As noted by **Jayatileke**, although the Pali-English Dictionary (PED: *ākāra* 5) defines *ākāra* here (in *ākāra, parivittakka*) in the second sense, it does not apply here, that is, not in the sense of “reason” in this context (1963:274). In other words, the uninformed person (the uninstructed worldling) tends to reason based on “form, appearance, external characteristics, etc,” but not from personal experience. This would be like noticing that once the traffic light turns green, we at once cross the street, without looking either left or right, and so on, before actually crossing. A drunk or mad driver might not obey or notice the traffic lights.

**The Vimāṃsaka Sutta** (M 47) throws a definitive light on this point. The Buddha declares that if anyone were to ask a monk, “But what are the reasons (*ākāra*) and grounds (*anvaya*) on which the venerable ones say that the Buddha is fully awakened...” (*ke paṇ’āyasmato ākāra ke anvayā yen’āyasmā evaṃ vadesi, sammā, sambuddho bhagavā...*), he should be able to reply that he has by his own higher knowledge come to realize the truth of certain sections of the Dharma so that he can conclude that the Blessed One is the fully self-awakened one... (*tathā tathā’haṃ tasmim’ dhamme abhiññāya idh’ekaccaṃ dhammaṃ dhammesu niṭṭhaṃ agamaṃ... sammā, sambuddho bhagavā...*).<sup>58</sup> Here Jayatileke notes:

This *ākāra*- is here used to denote the “reasons” which are adequate for one to have a rational belief (*saddhā*) not amounting to knowledge (*ñāṇa*).<sup>59</sup> When, therefore, it is said that “one should not accept (anything as true) after reflecting on reasons” what is meant is reflecting on reasons, not quite adequate for one to claim knowledge. (Jayatileke 1963:274 f)

**(5) Conviction to a view after pondering on it (*diṭṭhi, nijjhāna-k, khanti*).** The phrase *diṭṭhi, nijjhāna-k, khanti* can be translated in any of the following ways:

- “reflective acceptance of a view” (M 95.14/2:170: Ñānamoli & Bodhi, M:ÑB 780);
- “reflection on and approval of some theory” (A 4.193/2:191: Woodward, S:W 2:200);
- “because one is convinced of some theory” (Jayatileke 1963:275);
- “being convinced of a view after pondering over it”;
- “conviction to a view after thinking about it.”

The phrase occurs often enough in the suttas. It appears twice in **the Alagaddûpama Sutta** (M 22) where it is applied to a conviction after thinking about an idea or teaching, thus:

Some misguided people...having learnt the Dharma, do not examine the (true) purpose [the meaning] of those teachings with wisdom.

Without examining the (true) purpose [the meaning] of those teachings with wisdom, they are not convinced of it [they fail to see its wisdom].

*Ekacce mogha, purisā dhammaṃ pariyāpuṇanti... tam’ dhammaṃ pariyāpunitvā tesam’ dhammānaṃ paññāya atthaṃ na upaparikkhanti, tesam’ te dhammā paññāya atthaṃ anupaparikkhataṃ na nijjhānaṃ khamanti...*

(M 22.10/1:133 f) = SD 3.13<sup>60</sup>

<sup>57</sup> See PED: *ākāra*; CPD: DPL (Cone): *ākāra*<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>58</sup> M 47.15/1:320.

<sup>59</sup> See op cit §666.

<sup>60</sup> See also **Kīṭṭhā, giri S** (M 70.23/1:479) = SD 11.1.

Such a person is said to have learned the Dharma (or any field of learning) the wrong way, learning it “only for the sake of criticizing others and for winning debates”: he has grasped the water-snake the wrong way (by the tail) and is in danger of being bitten by it so that he suffers great pain or even death.

The wise person, on the other hand, carefully examines the teaching with wisdom, and then, convinced of its wisdom, accepts it, not for the sake of criticizing others or for winning debates, but for the true purpose of learning the Dharma, namely, spiritual liberation. He is like one who grasps the water-snake rightly (with a cleft stick and then by its neck) so that he does not suffer any pain or danger.<sup>61</sup>

There are clearly two usages of the expression, *diṭṭhi, nijjhāna-k, khanti*, that is, the negative one (where there is no careful examination of the idea or teaching with wisdom, that is, a blind wholesale acceptance) and the positive one (where there is a careful examination with wisdom and provisional acceptance). The acceptance or conviction grows fuller in tandem with our direct experience of its truth and goodness.

As long as our knowledge of a teaching is incomplete, we have to go on investigating until we fully understand it. At least, we should not declare that this *is* the truth, and everything else is false. **The Pañcattaya Sutta** (M 102) warns us that partial knowledge can be dangerous:

Therein, bhikshus, as regards those recluses and brahmins who hold such a doctrine and view as this: “The self and the world are eternal: only this is true, all else is false,”<sup>62</sup> indeed, apart from faith, apart from personal preference, apart from repeated hearing, reasoned thought [specious reasoning], and being convinced of a view after pondering over it [conviction to a view after thinking it], that such a knowledge will be pure and clear personal knowledge (*paccattam yeva ñāṇam*)—this is impossible.<sup>63</sup>

Since they have no pure and clear personal knowledge, even the mere partial knowledge (*ñāṇa, bhāga, mattam eva*) that those good recluses and brahmins clarify (regarding their view) is declared to be clinging (*upādāna*) on their part. [Comy: That is, not really knowledge but wrong understanding; thus, it is declared to be clinging to views. MA 4:25] (M 102.15/2:234) = SD 40.12

The most important application of the phrase *nijjhāna-k, khanti* is in the form of the verbal clause, *nijjhānam khamanti*, “they accept after pondering over it” or “they reflectively accept it,” is found in **the (Anicca) Cakkhu Sutta** (S 25.1) (and the other nine suttas in the same chapter) in this passage on the truth-follower (*dhammānusārī*):

Bhikshus, they who accept these truths [the impermanence of all phenomena] after pondering over them (*nijjhānam khamanti*) with some wisdom thus, is called a “**truth-follower**.”

He has entered the fixed course of rightness, entered the plane of true individuals, gone beyond the plane of the worldlings.

He is incapable of doing any intentional deed by which he might be reborn in hell, or in the animal world, or in the ghost realm. He is incapable of dying without attaining the fruit of streamwinning. (S 25.1.5/3:225) = SD 16.7

Here we see the use of “accept...after pondering over it” or “reflective accepting it” (*nijjhāna-k, khamanti*) in a positive sense, that is, in connection with the attainment of streamwinning in this life itself, that is, by way of constantly practising the perception of impermanence (*anicca, saññā*).<sup>64</sup> This is the second of

<sup>61</sup> M 22.11/1:134 = SD 3.13.

<sup>62</sup> The stock passages repeat for 14 other wrong views.

<sup>63</sup> That is, they can only uphold this claim on some ground other than knowledge, that is, as a belief or as reasoning. In any case, according to **Caṅkī S** (M 95.14/2:170 f), it may turn out to be either true or false.

<sup>64</sup> S 25.1.5/3:225 = SD 16.7 Intro (5).

two ways of attaining streamwinning are described in the (Anicca) Cakkhu Sutta. In this case, the practitioner relies on his faculty of wisdom (*paññ'indriya*)<sup>65</sup> to practise the perception of impermanence and as such guarantees himself the attaining of streamwinning in this life itself. The first is that of the faith-follower (*saddhā'nusārī*) [see (1) above].

**3.4 THE FIVE GROUNDS IN PERSPECTIVE.** These five grounds are mentioned in a number of places in the Nikāyas, namely:<sup>66</sup>

<b>Caṅkī Sutta</b>	do not confuse belief and knowledge	(M 95.14/2:170 f),
<b>Pañcattaya Sutta</b>	partial knowledge is still wrong view	(M 102.15/2:234),
<b>Deva,daha Sutta</b>	knowledge must be based on experience	(M 101.11/2:218),
<b>Kosambī Sutta</b>	personal knowledge and belief	(S 12.68/2:115),
<b>Atthi Nu Kho Pariyāya Sutta</b>	knowledge arises through mindfulness	(S 35.153/4:138).

The five grounds are elaborated into the ten “doubtworthy points” (*\*kankhāniya-t,thāna*) in **the Kesa-puttiya Sutta** (A 3.65)<sup>67</sup> and **the Bhaddiya Sutta** (A 4.192).<sup>68</sup>

An understanding of the five grounds is very useful in expediting our spiritual progress. The five grounds are all personal views (*diṭṭhi*), that is, incomplete understanding, even misunderstanding, of true reality. To know a teaching is to thoroughly experience it, so that we clearly understand it, and so that there is no margin for error. It is like travelling on a journey, and one that is long and dangerous: we must really know our way well and bring suitable and enough equipments and provisions. Just because we loudly *claim* to know the way does not mean that we are *sure* of it. First, we need to learn to travel the path safely and expediently from one who has gone on the path before us. Then we have to take that journey ourselves. If we are not sure of the path, we simply need to examine the maps, the terrain and then choose the best way. It is all right to move slowly, as long as we do not stop too long or turn back.

RATIONALE FOR INTERFAITH DIALOGUE. Section 15 of the Caṅkī Sutta—that we preserve the truth, thinking such is “*my faith, or personal preference, or my repeated hearing, or reasoned thought, or reflective acceptance of a view*”—is clearly the climax of the Sutta. The import here is that everyone is entitled to an opinion or his view, especially religious ones, but to proclaim that everyone else must adhere to one’s opinion or view does not “preserve (or guard) the truth.” Simply proclaiming such views does *not* mean that we have awakened to the truth. As long as we do not have a direct personal experience of those opinions or views they would turn out to be *either* true or false. This is the most important rationale for religious tolerance and interfaith dialogue.

## 4 Belief and knowledge

**4.1 SUSPENDING JUDGEMENT.** Kāpaṭhika Mānava presents the Buddha with this thesis: “that the ancient Vedic mantras<sup>69</sup> that have been handed down through a lineage of oral transmission, and in the canon of texts, the brahmins make the categorical conclusion that only this is true; all else is false” [12b]. The Buddha systematically points out to Kāpaṭhika (and brahmins present) that this statement at best expresses a *belief*. And it may well be remembered that “A belief is not merely an idea the mind possesses; it is an idea that possesses the mind.”<sup>70</sup>

<sup>65</sup> See **Āpaṇa S** (S 48.50/5:225 f) = SD 10.4.

<sup>66</sup> On the 5 grounds, see Jayatilleke 1963:182-188, 274-276.

<sup>67</sup> A 3.65/1:188-193 = SD 35.4. The 10 doubtworthy points (which are not in themselves necessarily valid sources of knowledge) are: (1) oral tradition (*anussava*); (2) lineage (paramparā); (3) hearsay (*iti,kira*); (4) scriptural authority (*piṭaka,sampadāna*); (5) pure reason (*takka,hetu*); (6) inference or logic (*naya,hetu*); (7) reasoned thought (*ākāra,parivittakka*); (8) acceptance after pondering on it (*diṭṭhi,nijjhāna-k,khanti*); (9) seeming ability (*bhavya,-rūpata*); (10) “This ascetic is our teacher [respected by us]” (*samaṇo no garū ti*).

<sup>68</sup> A 4.193/2:191.

<sup>69</sup> *Manta,pada*. Comy: Both *manta* and *manta,pada* refer to the Vedas (MA 3:424).

<sup>70</sup> Robert Oxtan Bolt (1924-1995), English playwright and twice oscar-winning screenwriter.

It should be noted that none of the suttas actually says that any of the five grounds of belief are *false*, but that they are incomplete (*bhāga,matta*), because they do not arise from personal experience, and as such entail clinging (*upādāna*), since the believer is still not spiritually awakened. They however have the *possibility* of truth, although this is *not* a certainty of truth: the belief can turn out be true or false here and now (*diṭṭhe ’va dhamme dvidhā vipākā*). So, true knowledge has to come from another source: personal direct experience *in this life itself*.<sup>71</sup>

In other words, we must be able to differentiate between belief, reasoning and knowledge. Belief is only a provisional view, and at best incomplete knowledge. Reasoning is basically how we think, based mostly on our habitual tendencies (or more technically, latent tendencies). We can only be spiritually liberated by our own direct knowledge, that is, personal experience: if we are sick we need to take the medicine ourselves. However, we need to start somewhere, and as we persevere, our experiential knowledge will grow. In the meantime, it is all right to suspend judgement and use what we know to plan and take the next careful step in the right direct to liberation.

**4.2 PRESERVING, DISCOVERING AND ATTAINING THE TRUTH.** After the Buddha has declared that the five grounds are not satisfactory as bases for knowledge, Kāpaṭhika asks how the truth is preserved (*saccānurakkhana*). The Buddha replies that we should first *acknowledge* on which of the five grounds our belief based; secondly, we do not come to the conclusion that this is *final knowledge* (that is, “only this is true, all else false”). To that extent, we are “presevering the truth.” [§15]

At this point, a very important word is introduced in the Sutta: the noun *samannesanā* (“examining”) and its verb, *samannesati* (“he examines”) [1.3.2].<sup>72</sup> This method of investigation clearly elaborates on that taught in **the Vīmaṃsaka Sutta** (M 47), but which covers a broader area regarding the purpose of learning the Dharma.<sup>73</sup> The disciple is exhorted to examine the teacher if he conduct is in anyway motivated by greed [§17], by hate [§18], or by delusion [§19]. When we are sure that the teacher is free from the three unwholesome roots, or at least have a good hold on them, then we go on to discover the truth with his help.

Since this believing is only a provisional step in learning about true reality, there is a need for “the discovering of the truth” (*saccānubodha*) [§20]. This is best done with the help of a morally virtuous and wise teacher [§§17-19]. Filled with faith, we respectfully approach the teacher for the purpose of learning the Dharma in a twelve-step process first given in the direct order [§20], and then in the reverse order [§§21b-33]. These two approaches are interesting as the direct process begins with provisional faith (*amūlika saddhā*), while the reverse process—the stage of “the attaining of the truth” (*saccānupatti*)—leads to wise faith (*avecca-p,pasāda*), which is rooted in some wisdom at least. The important latter stage arises from “associating with the Dharma and working hard at cultivating it” (*tesaṃ yeva...dhammānaṃ āsevanā bhāvanā bahulī,kammaṃ saccānupatti*) [§21b].

**4.3 SUPREMACY OF KNOWLEDGE OVER BELIEF.** Belief or faith (*saddhā*) and all the other four grounds, as such, are only a first step towards true knowledge, which then replaces it. The five grounds are not intrinsically valuable in themselves, but are means to higher spiritual end, that of direct knowledge leading to spiritual liberation. In fact, it bears no comparison with direct knowledge, which arises from the direct experience of reality and personal verification of truth.

The supremacy of knowledge over faith is clearly evinced in this dialogue between Citta the householder and the nirgrantha Nāta,putta, as recorded in **the Nigaṇṭha Nāta,putta Sutta**:

[Nāta,putta:] “Do you, householder, have faith in the ascetic Gotama when he says, ‘There is a samadhi without initial application and sustained application, there is a cessation of initial application and sustained application [thinking and pondering]’?”<sup>74</sup>

<sup>71</sup> See Jayatilleke 1963:185.

<sup>72</sup> See also §20 for def and refs.

<sup>73</sup> M 47.4/1:318.

<sup>74</sup> As will soon be apparent, this clearly refers to the second dhyana.

[Citta:] “Here, venerable sir, I do not go by faith in the Blessed One when he says, ‘There is a samadhi without initial application and sustained application, there is a cessation of initial application and sustained application.’”

When this was said, Nigaṇṭha Nāta,putta looked up at his own retinue and said,  
 “See this, sirs! How straight is this Citta the householder! Not fraudulent, not deceitful! One who thinks that initial application can be stopped would imagine that he could catch the wind in a net, one who thinks that sustained application can be stopped would imagine that he could stop the flow of the river Ganges with his own fist.”

[Citta:] “What do you think, bhante, which is more exquisite (*pañītātara*): knowledge (*ñāṇa*) or faith (*saddhā*)?”

[Nāta,putta:] “Surely, knowledge, householder, is more sublime than faith.”

[Then, Citta, declares that he is able to attain to the fourth dhyana, and adds:]

“It is indeed not so, bhante! Knowing thus, seeing thus (*evam jānanto evam passanto*), bhante, in what other ascetic or brahmin need I go by faith that there is a samadhi without initial application and sustained application, a cessation of initial application and sustained application?”  
 (S 41.8/4:298) = SD 40.7

## 5 The 12-step learning process

The **Caṅkī Sutta** (M 95) lists the spiritual learning process in twelve stages—first in the normal sequence (the gradual training) [§20], and then in reverse (the twelve-step training) [§§21b-33]—and it adds that the latter leads to “the attaining of truth” (*saccānupatti*), that is, arhathood.<sup>75</sup> This list (normal sequence) is also found in the **Kīṭāgiri Sutta** (M 70), where it is called “the gradual training” (*anupubba,sikkhā*), thus:

- (1) Faith (*saddhā*) conduces one to visit (that is, to see) a teacher.
- (2) Approaching (*upasāṅkamana*) the teacher conduces one to respectfully attending to the teacher.
- (3) Respectfully drawing near (*payirupāsana*) to the teacher conduces to lending the ear.<sup>76</sup>
- (4) Lending the ear [listening attentively] (*sotāvadhāna*) conduces to listening to the Dharma.<sup>77</sup>
- (5) Listening to the Dharma (*dhamma,savana*) conduces to remembering the Dharma.
- (6) Remembering the Dharma (*dhamma,dhāraṇā*) conduces to the examination of its meaning.
- (7) Investigating the meaning (*atth’upaparikkhā*) of the teachings helps us reflectively accept them (or to accept them after pondering on them).
- (8) Reflectively accepting the teachings (*dhamma,nijjhāna,khanti*)<sup>78</sup> conduces to will-power [desire].
- (9) Will-power [wholesome desire] (*chanda*) conduces to effort.
- (10) Exertion (*ussāha*) conduces to scrutiny.
- (11) Weighing [balancing the practice] (*tulanā*) conduces to striving.
- (12) Striving on (*pahit’atta*), he realizes through his own body the supreme truth and sees it by penetrating it with wisdom [arhathood].<sup>79</sup>

<sup>75</sup> M 95.21-33/2:174-176 = SD 21.15.

<sup>76</sup> Here “drawing near” refers to a spiritual closeness, not a physical or social closeness (cf Dh 64-65). Indeed, it is a task of the lay follower to keep a social distance from the renunciant so that his/her rule of celibacy and mindfulness are well kept. On indirect ways by which the monastic’s spiritual training can be endangered, see **Methuna S** (A 7.47/-4:54-56) = SD 21.9.

<sup>77</sup> This incl esp switching off our handphones and similar devices totally, and definitely not using them during such teaching or meditation sessions. We should also prepare ourselves by not conversing about unrelated topics, so that the mind is calm and clear to receive the Dharma. See §20(7) n.

<sup>78</sup> The phrasing here shows or suggests how *dhamma,nijjhāna,khanti* should be resolved, ie with *dhammā* as pl.

<sup>79</sup> Be Ee: *Pahitatto samāno kāyena c’eva paramam saccam sacchikaroti, paññāya ca nam aṭivijjha passati*. Here, **Caṅkī S** (M 95) has: “Striving (*padhāna*) conduces to the attaining of truth (*saccānupatti*).” M 95.21/2:173 f = SD 21.15. Both passages mean the same thing. Comy on Caṅkī S says that *saccānubodha* means “awakening to



(M 70.23-24/1:480 = SD 11.1) = (M 95.20/2:173 = SD 21.15)

This teaching is a twelve-step “psychology of learning.” The learning process is not just a matter of rote or book-learning, but of spiritual friendship with the teacher (1-4), which in turn is a fertile ground for learning (5-8), which leads to efforts in spiritual change (9-12) and realization. We also see here a more elaborate exposition of **the Maṅgala Sutta** quatrain on the four qualities beginning with patience:

<i>khantī ca sovacassatā</i>	Patience, being tractable [being responsive to instruction],	
<i>samaṇānaṅ ca dassanaṃ</i>	Seeing the recluses [especially left-home practitioners],	
<i>kālena dhamma,sākaḥchā</i>	And timely Dharma discussions—	
<i>etaṃ maṅgalaṃ uttamaṃ</i>	This is the highest blessing.	(Kh 5.9 = Sn 266)

It is interesting to see here how “being convinced of the teachings after pondering on them” (*dharmā nijjhānaṃ khamantī*) gives the positive counterpart of the doubtful point known as *diṭṭhi,nijjhāna,-khanti* of the Kesa,puttiya Sutta (A 3.65).<sup>80</sup> Here we see the proper context where pondering (through wise attention) on a teaching as a spiritual exercise, and is not a cursory or biased acceptance of [being convinced of] a view after some thought.<sup>81</sup>

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the path” (*maggānubodha*), and *saccānupatti* means “realization of the fruit” (*phala,sacchikiriyā*) (MA 3:427). See §20(12) n. .

<sup>80</sup> See A 3.65.3a/1:189 = SD 35.4 comy 3a(8)

<sup>81</sup> See A 3.65 = SD 35.4 Intro (5.3).

## The Caṅkī Discourse

(M 95/2:164-177)

1 [164] Thus have I heard.<sup>82</sup>

### The brahmin Caṅkī

2 At one time the Blessed One, while wandering in Kosala country with a large community of monks, reached a brahmin village named Opasāda.<sup>83</sup> There the Blessed One stayed in a sal grove in the Deva Forest [Deva,vana],<sup>84</sup> north of Opasāda.

3a Now at that time, the brahmin Caṅkī<sup>85</sup> was living [ruling]<sup>86</sup> in Opasāda, teeming with life,<sup>87</sup> with grass, wood and water, with rice, a royal domain presented (to him) by Pasenadi, the rajah of Kosala, as a royal gift, a brahmadeya [a fief].<sup>88</sup>

### The brahmin householders visit the Buddha

3b Now the brahmin householders of Opasāda heard thus:<sup>89</sup>

“It is said, sir, that the recluse Gotama,<sup>90</sup> a Sakya son, who went forth from the Sakya clan, is wandering (on a Dharma-tour) in Kosala country with a large number of monks numbering some five hundred, has arrived at Opasāda, staying in a sal grove in the Deva Forest, north of Opasāda.”

3c Now a good report about that Master Gotama has been going around thus.<sup>91</sup>

“So, too, is he the Blessed One.<sup>92</sup> for, he is arhat, fully self-awakened, accomplished in wisdom and conduct, well-farer, knower of worlds, peerless guide of tamable people, teacher of gods and humans, awakened, blessed.

Having realized by his own direct knowledge this world with its gods, its Māras and its Brahmās, this generation with its recluses and brahmins, its rulers and people, he makes it known to others.

<sup>82</sup> From here down to §10 closely parallels with the opening of **Soṇa,daṇḍa S** (D 4.1-6/1:111-117) = SD 30.5.

<sup>83</sup> Opasāda: see Intro 1.1.

<sup>84</sup> “In a sal grove in the Deva Forest,” *deva,vane sāla,vane*. Comy: The Deva Forest is so called because offerings are often made to the gods there (MA 3:414).

<sup>85</sup> See Intro (1.1).

<sup>86</sup> *Ajjhāvasati* has the senses of living (as in leading a household life) and living as a lord (over a fief, etc).

<sup>87</sup> *Satt’ussadaṃ* = *satta* + *ussada*, lit “abundance of beings,” ie densely populated with humans and animals.

Comy however refers only to humans: “*satt’ussada* means crowded with beings, teeming with the masses, an abundance of humans” (*satt’ussadan ti sattehi ussadaṃ, ussannaṃ bahu.janaṃ ākiṇṇa,manussaṃ*, DA 245,20).

<sup>88</sup> *Opasādaṃ ajjhāvasati satt’ussadaṃ sa,tīna,kaṭṭh’odakaṃ sa,dhaññaṃ rāja,bhoggaṃ raññā Pasenadinā Kosalena dinnaṃ rāja,dāyaṃ brahma,deyyaṃ*. This is stock with differing locations and donors: **Ambaṭṭha S** (*Ukkaṭṭhaṃ...raññā Pasenadi,kosalena*, D 3.1.1/1:87), **Soṇa,daṇḍa S** (*Campaṃ...raññā Māgadhenā Seniyena Bimbisārena*, D 1.1/1:111, 1.4/114), **Kūṭa,danta S** (*Khāṇu,mataṃ...raññā Māgadhenā Seniyena Bimbisārena*, D 5.1/1:127, 131), **Lohicca S** (*Sāla,vatikaṃ... raññā Pasenadi,kosalena*, D 7.1/1:224), **Pāyāsi S** (*Setavyāyaṃ... raññā Pasenadi,kosalena*, D 23.1/2:316); **Caṅkī S** (*Opasādaṃ... raññā Pasenadinā Kosalena*, M 95.1/2:164, 95.8/166); cf **Amba,sakkhara Pv**: *satt’ussadaṃ nirayaṃ*, “a hell crowded with beings” (Pv 4.1.8/46). **Brahma,deyya**, (Skt *brahma,deya*) “a supreme gift,” ie land granted to brahmins by the rajah of Kosala and of Magadha for perpetuity. Unlike donated monastic lands, which are the corporate property of the “sangha of the four directions,” the brahmadeya is the brahmin’s personal property or fief, which he uses for agriculture. In the case of Kūṭa,danta, for example, we see him using such income to perform a large sacrifice (D 5/1:127-149 = SD 22.8). See D:RD 1:108 n1 & Uma Chakravarti, *The Social Dimensions of Buddhism*, 1987:57.

<sup>89</sup> The foll passage on the Buddha’s reputation [§3] is stock, as in **Raṭṭha,pāla S** (M 82.2/2:55). From here until §6b, closely parallels **Kūṭa,danta S** (D 5.2-5/1:128 f) = SD 22.8.

<sup>90</sup> This is a stock passage to show that the brahmin householders are well acquainted with the Buddha’s background. This paragraph denotes the Buddha’s social status (in the minds of the brahmins and the world), which adds a significant sense of charisma to his personality.

<sup>91</sup> For details on the recollection of the Buddha’s virtues, see **Buddhānussati** = SD 15.7.

<sup>92</sup> Alt tr: “For the following reasons, too, he is the Blessed One [the Lord]...” On the meaning of *itī pi so*, see **Buddhānussati** = SD 15.7 (2.2) & n.

He teaches the Dharma, good in the beginning, good in the middle, good in the end, both in the spirit and in the letter.

He proclaims the holy life that is entirely complete and pure.

It is good to see arhats such as these.”<sup>93</sup>

4 Then the brahmin householders of Opasāda left Opasāda in in group after group according to their district,<sup>94</sup> or in small bands, heading for the Deva Forest in the sal grove.

### Caṅkī hears of the Buddha

5 Now at that time, the brahmin Caṅkī had gone up to the upper terrace of his house for a siesta.

He saw the brahmin householders of Opasāda leaving Opasāda in droves, group after group, heading for the Deva Forest in the sal grove. Seeing them, he addressed an attendant:<sup>95</sup>

“Attendant, why are these brahmin householders of Opasāda leaving Opasāda in droves, group after group, heading for the Deva Forest in the sal grove?”

6a “There is the recluse Gotama, the Sakya son, who went forth from a Sakyan family, is wandering (on a Dharma-tour) in Kosala country with a large number of monks numbering some five hundred. He has arrived in Opasāda, and is staying in a sal grove in the Deva Forest.

Now a good report about that Master Gotama has been going round thus:

“The Blessed One is an arhat, fully self-awakened, accomplished in wisdom and conduct, well-farer, knower of worlds, peerless guide of tamable people, teacher of gods and humans, awakened, blessed.”

### Caṅkī wishes to see the Buddha<sup>96</sup>

6b Then the brahmin Caṅkī addressed the attendant, thus:

“In that case, master attendant, approach those brahmin householders of Opasāda and say this to them:

“Sirs, the brahmin Caṅkī says thus:

“Sirs, could you please wait!<sup>97</sup> The brahmin Caṅkī, too, will go and see the recluse Gotama.”

“Yes, sir,” the attendant replied to the brahmin Caṅkī, [165] and approached the brahmin householders of Opasāda.

Having approached the brahmin householders of Opasāda, he said this,

“Sirs, the brahmin Caṅkī says thus:

“Sirs, could you please wait! The brahmin Caṅkī, too, will go and see the recluse Gotama.”

### Caṅkī’s social status<sup>98</sup>

7 Now at that time, five hundred brahmins<sup>99</sup> from various districts [states]<sup>100</sup> were staying at Opasāda on some business or other. These brahmins heard that the brahmin Caṅkī is going to see the Buddha.

<sup>93</sup> *Sādhu kho pana tathā,rūpānaṃ arahataṃ dassanaṃ hotī ti. Arahataṃ* is 3 gen pl. For details on this statement, see **Kesa,puttiya S** (A 3.65/1:188-193) = SD 35.4a (comy n 1d).

<sup>94</sup> Ce Ee Se *saṅghā saṅghī* [Be *saṅgha,saṅghī gaṇī,bhūtā*; as at D 23.3/2:317; M 95.4/2:164; UA 380. Tr here follows Comy, where *saṅgha* is def as “the separate communities from the districts” (*ekekissāya disāya saṅgho etesaṃ atthī’ti*) (DA 1:280). It is possible that these were tribes or clans. Cf *saṅghānaṃ gaṇānaṃ* (M 25.12/1:231); *nara,gaṇa,saṅgha...* (A 4.51.4/2:55\*).

<sup>95</sup> *Khattā* (Skt *kṣātrī*) an attendant, a porter, an equerry, a steward (D 1:112, 128; M 2:164)

<sup>96</sup> This section [§§7-9a] is stock, as in **Soṇa,daṇḍa S** (D 4.4-5/1:113 f). This para is also found in **Assalāyana S** (93.2/2:147) & **Caṅkī S** (M 95.7/1:165).

<sup>97</sup> *Āgamentu kira bhavanto.*

<sup>98</sup> This whole section and the next are mutatis mutandis as in **Soṇa,daṇḍa S** (D 4.5-6/1:113-117 = SD 30.5) & **Kūṭa,danta S** (D 5.6/1:129-131 = SD 22.8).

<sup>99</sup> *Pañca,mattāni brāhmaṇa,satāni*; but **Kūṭa,danta S** (D 5.5/1:129) has “many hundreds of brahmins” (*anekāni brāhmaṇa,satāni*).

<sup>100</sup> “From various provinces,” *nānā,verajjakānaṃ*. The word *verajja* = *vi* + *rajja* (lit “separate kingdoms”); Comy gives examples of Kāsi and Kosala (MA 3:416).

Then these brahmins approached the brahmin Caṅkī. Having approached the brahmin Caṅkī, they said this to the brahmin Caṅkī:

“Is it true that master Caṅkī is going to see the ascetic Gotama?”

“Yes, it is so, sirs, I am going to see the ascetic Gotama.”

**8a** “Let not the master Caṅkī go and see the recluse Gotama! It is not worthy of the master Caṅkī to go and see the recluse Gotama! But it is worthy of the ascetic Gotama to come and see the master Caṅkī!<sup>101</sup>

(1) For the master Caṅkī is well born on both the mother’s and the father’s sides for seven generations, with neither reproach nor defect in terms of birth.<sup>102</sup>

That the master Caṅkī is well born on both the mother’s and the father’s sides for seven generations, with neither reproach nor defect in terms of birth, it is not worthy of the master Caṅkī to go and see the recluse Gotama. It is indeed worthy of the recluse Gotama to come and see the master Caṅkī instead.

(2) For the master Caṅkī is rich, of great wealth, of great means.

That being the case, it is indeed worthy of the recluse Gotama to come and see the master Caṅkī instead.

(3)<sup>103</sup> For the master Caṅkī is a master of the Three Vedas, along with their invocations and rituals, phonology and etymology, and the Iti,hāsa Purāṇas<sup>105</sup> as the fifth; learned in the Vedic padas,<sup>106</sup> a grammarian,<sup>107</sup> and well versed in the Lokāyata [nature-lore]<sup>108</sup> and the marks of the great man.<sup>109</sup>

That being the case, it is indeed worthy of the recluse Gotama to come and see the master Caṅkī instead.

(4)<sup>110</sup> For the master Caṅkī is handsome, good-looking, pleasing, endowed with the most excellent colour, of perfect complexion,<sup>111</sup> of perfect physique,<sup>112</sup> of no mean appearance, one worthy of being looked at.<sup>113</sup>

That being the case, it is indeed worthy of the recluse Gotama to come and see the master Caṅkī instead.

<sup>101</sup> After this, **Soṇa,daṇḍa S** (D 4.5/1:113) & **Kūṭa,danta S** (D 5.6/1:129) add this para: “If the master <Soṇa,daṇḍa> <Kūṭa,danta> goes and sees the recluse Gotama, the master <Soṇa,daṇḍa’s> <Kūṭa,danta’s> fame will be destroyed. The recluse Gotama’s fame will increase. That the master <Soṇa,daṇḍa’s> <Kūṭa,danta’s> fame will decrease, and the recluse Gotama’s fame will increase, it is indeed worthy of the recluse Gotama to come and see the master <Soṇa,daṇḍa> <Kūṭa,danta> instead.”

<sup>102</sup> See **Soṇa,daṇḍa S** (D 4) for the five things that brahmins claim make a brahmin (D 4.13/1:20): the first 4 are given here as (1), (3-5); the fifth concerns his ritual privilege.

<sup>103</sup> *Ajjhāyako manta,dharo tiṇṇaṃ vedānaṃ pāragū sa,nighaṇḍu,keṭubhānaṃ sākkhara-p,pabhedānaṃ iti,hāsa,-pañcamānaṃ, padako veyyākaraṇo lokāyata,mahā,purisa,lakkhaṇesu anavayo.*

<sup>104</sup> Foll this, **Kūṭa,danta S** (D 5) adds “a mantra-reciter, a mantra-expert” (*ajjhāyako manta,dharo*) (D 5.6(3)/1:130) = SD 22.8.

<sup>105</sup> Iti,hāsa Purāṇas are the oral tradition of brahminical legends of kings and sages.

<sup>106</sup> *Padako veyyākaraṇo*, ie, well versed in the *pada,pāṭha* of Sanskrit grammar. Technically, this refers to the *pada* (or literal, word for word) method of reciting (or writing) Veda sentences, ie, “a method of arranging each word of a Vedic text separately in its original form [cf *pada*] without regard to the rules of [sandhi]; cf *krama-* and *samhitā-pāṭha*.” (SED). By itself, *pada* can here be translated as “word or word structure.”

<sup>107</sup> On *veyyākaraṇa*, see BHSD: sv *vyākaraṇa*, = *vaiyākaraṇa* (p517).

<sup>108</sup> *Lokāyata*. This seems to be the early meaning of the term. Its reference of the materialistic philosophy of Cārvāka is apparently later: see Rhys Davids, D:RD 1:166-172. See **Lokāyatikā Brāhmaṇā S** (A 9.38/4:428-432) = SD 35.15. See also Jayatilleke 1963:48-58 (§§55-67).

<sup>109</sup> For details, see **Buddhānussati** = SD 15.7(4.1)n.

<sup>110</sup> The same is said of the Buddha at §7(6) below.

<sup>111</sup> *Brahma,vaṇṇī*, lit “Brahma-like complexion.”

<sup>112</sup> *Brahma,vaccasī* (PTS Ce) or *Brahma,vacchasi* (Be Se), lit “Brahma-like complexion.” Comy says that his body is like that of Mahā Brahmā (MA 3:418), which is one of the 32 marks of a great man (M 91).

<sup>113</sup> *Dassanāya*. On the Indian custom of gazing at a respected, virtuous or religious person, see **Mahā,parinibbāna S** (D 16) = SD 9 Intro (7e).

(5) For the master Caṅkī is morally virtuous, mature in virtue, endowed with mature virtue.

That being the case, it is indeed worthy of the recluse Gotama to come and see the master Caṅkī instead.

(6) For the master Caṅkī has a good voice, a good delivery, endowed with urbane speech, distinctly clear, not driveling [faultless in speech], able to clarify any issue.<sup>114</sup>

That being the case, it is indeed worthy of the recluse Gotama to come and see the master Caṅkī instead.

(7) For the master Caṅkī is a teacher of teachers of many, uttering the mantras to three hundred brahmin youths.<sup>115</sup>

That being the case, it is indeed worthy of the recluse Gotama to come and see the master Caṅkī instead.<sup>116</sup>

(8) For the master Caṅkī is honoured, respected, held in high esteem, venerated and revered by Pasenadi, the rajah of Kosala.

That being the case, it is indeed worthy of the recluse Gotama to come and see the master Caṅkī instead.

(9) For the master Caṅkī is honoured, respected, held in high esteem, venerated and revered by the brahmin Pokkhara, sāti.<sup>117</sup>

That being the case, it is indeed worthy of the recluse Gotama to come and see the master Caṅkī instead.

(10) For the master Caṅkī lives [rules] in Opasāda, teeming with life, with grass, wood and water, with rice, a royal domain presented (to him) by Pasenadi, the rajah of Kosala, as a royal gift, a brahmadeya [a fief].<sup>118</sup>

That the master Caṅkī lives [rules] in Opasāda, teeming with life, with grass, wood and water, with rice, a royal domain presented (to him) by Pasenadi, the rajah of Kosala, as a royal gift, a brahmadeya [a fief], it is not worthy of the master Caṅkī to go and see the recluse Gotama. It is indeed worthy of the recluse Gotama to come and see the master Caṅkī instead.”

### Caṅkī's praise of the Buddha<sup>119</sup>

**8b** When this was said, the brahmin Caṅkī said this to the brahmins:

“In that case, sirs, listen to me, too, as to why it is worthy of *us* to go and see master Gotama, and that it is unworthy of master Gotama to come and see us.

**9a** (1) Indeed, sirs, the recluse Gotama is well born on both the mother's and the father's sides for seven generations, with neither reproach nor defect in terms of birth.<sup>120</sup>

<sup>114</sup> *Bhavaṃ hi Kūṭadanto kalyāṇavāco kalyāṇa, vākkaraṇo poriyā vācāya samannāgato vissaṭṭhāya anelagalāya athassa viññāpatiyā.* The same is said of the Buddha at §7(8) below.

<sup>115</sup> Foll this, **Kūṭa, danta S** (D 5) adds: “Many are the brahmin youths who come from various quarters and various districts with the desire to learn the mantras and the meaning of the mantras in the master Caṅkī's presence [from the master Caṅkī himself]” (*bahū kho pana nānā, disā nānā, janapadā māṇavakā āgacchanti bhoṭo Kūṭadantassa santike mantatthikā mante adhiyitu, kāmā*). (D 5.6(7)/1:130) = SD 22.8.

<sup>116</sup> Here, **Kūṭa, danta S** (D 5) adds: “For the master Caṅkī is old, mature, very elderly, long lived, advanced in years. But the recluse Gotama is young, and is a young recluse” (*Bhavaṃ hi Kūṭa, danto jīṇo vuddho mahallako addha, gato vayo anuppatto, samaṇo Gotamo taruṇo c'eva taruṇa, paribbājako ca*). (D 5.6(8)/1:130) = SD 22.8)

<sup>117</sup> **Pokkhara, sāti** or Pokkhara, sāti is a brahmin of great wealth (*mahā, sāla*) and learning, living in Ukkatthā, on a brahmadeya (fief) given by rajah Pasenadi of Kosala. Pokkharasāti sends his pupil, Ambaṭṭha, to the Buddha at Icchānaṅgala to confirm if the report of the Buddha's greatness were true. When Pokkharasāti later hears that he has been rude to the Buddha, Pokkharasāti himself sees the Buddha by night and begs for his forgiveness. He invites the Buddha to a meal the following morning, and hearing the teaching, becomes a streamwinner and a follower (D 3/1:87-110) = SD 21.3. See Intro (1.3.1).

<sup>118</sup> See §1 nn.

<sup>119</sup> This whole section parallel as in **Soṇa, daṇḍa S** (D 4.6/1:115 f = SD 30.4) & **Kūṭa, danta S** (M 9.7/1:131-133 = SD 22.8).

<sup>120</sup> This is close to quality (12).

That the recluse Gotama is well born on both the mother's and the father's sides for seven generations, with neither reproach nor defect in terms of birth, it is not worthy of master Gotama to come and see the brahmin Caṅkī. It is indeed worthy of us to go and see the master Caṅkī instead.<sup>121</sup>

(2) Indeed, sirs, the recluse Gotama has gone forth, leaving behind a great amount of gold and silver, both underground and above ground.<sup>122</sup>

That being the case, it is indeed worthy of me to go and see master Gotama instead.

(3) Indeed, sirs, the recluse Gotama, went forth while still young, a black-haired young man endowed with the blessing of youth, in the prime of life.<sup>123</sup>

That being the case, it is indeed worthy of me to go and see master Gotama instead.

(4) Indeed, sirs, the recluse Gotama, though his mother and father wished otherwise and wept with tearful faces, shaved off his hair and beard, put on the saffron robe, and went forth from the household life into the homeless life.<sup>124</sup>

That being the case, it is indeed worthy of me to go and see master Gotama instead.

(5) Indeed, sirs, the recluse Gotama is handsome, good-looking, pleasing, endowed with the most excellent colour, [167] of perfect complexion, of perfect physique, of no mean appearance, one worthy of being looked at.<sup>125</sup>

That being the case, it is indeed worthy of me to go and see master Gotama instead.

(6) Indeed, sirs, the recluse Gotama is morally virtuous, noble in virtue, wholesome in virtue, endowed with wholesome virtue.<sup>126</sup>

That being the case, it is indeed worthy of me to go and see master Gotama instead.

(7) Indeed, sirs, the recluse Gotama has a good voice, a good delivery, endowed with polished [urbane] speech, distinctly clear, not driveling [faultless in speech], able to clarify any issue.<sup>127</sup>

That being the case, it is indeed worthy of me to go and see master Gotama instead.

(8) Indeed, sirs, the recluse Gotama is a teacher of teachers of many.

That being the case, it is indeed worthy of me to go and see master Gotama instead.

(9) Indeed, sirs, the recluse Gotama has destroyed desire and lust, and abandoned personal vanity.<sup>128</sup>

That being the case, it is indeed worthy of me to go and see master Gotama instead.

(10) Indeed, sirs, the recluse Gotama is one who teaches karma, who teaches action, without any bad intention towards the brahmin race.<sup>129</sup>

That being the case, it is indeed worthy of me to go and see master Gotama instead.

(11) Indeed, sirs, the recluse Gotama is one gone forth from a high family, a kshatriya family (unmixed) from the beginning.<sup>130</sup>

That being the case, it is indeed worthy of me to go and see master Gotama instead.

<sup>121</sup> Foll this, **Kūṭa,danta S** (D 5) adds: “Indeed, sirs, the recluse Gotama has gone forth, leaving behind a great community of relatives” (*Samaṇo khalo bho Gotamo mahantaṃ ñāti,saṅghaṃ ohāya pabbajito*) (D 5.7(2)/1:131 = 22.8).

<sup>122</sup> “Underground and above ground” (*bhūmi,gatañ ca vehāsaṭṭhañ ca*, lit “gone underground or standing in the air”); this is close to quality (12). See Old Comy at V 3:48 & V:H 1:79 n6.

<sup>123</sup> This—and the next section—are also spoken by Soṇa,daṇḍa (**Soṇa,daṇḍa S**, D 4.6/1:115 = SD 30.4), and by the Buddha himself in **Ariya,pariyesanā S** (M 26.14/1:163 = SD 1.11).

<sup>124</sup> This—and the preceding section—are also spoken by Soṇa,daṇḍa (**Soṇa,daṇḍa S**, D 4.6/1:115 = SD 30.4), and by the Buddha himself in **Ariya,pariyesanā S** (M 26.14/1:163 = SD 1.11).

<sup>125</sup> The same is said of the brahmin Kūṭa,danta at §6(4) above.

<sup>126</sup> *Samaṇo khalu bho Gotamo sīlavā ariya,sīlī kusala,sīlī kusala,sīlena samannāgato.*

<sup>127</sup> The same is said of the brahmin Kūṭa,danta at §6(6) above.

<sup>128</sup> *Samaṇo khalu bho Gotamo khīṇa,kāma,rāgo vigata,cāpallō.* On *capala*, see M 69.7/1:470; Vbh 854/351 f & VbhA 2357/477; Vism 3.95/105 f = Vism:Ñ 108 n22. The meaning here is that the Buddha lives a very simple uncluttered life.

<sup>129</sup> *Samaṇo khalu bho Gotamo kamma,vādī kiriya,vādī apāpa,purekkhāro brahmaññāya pajāya.*

<sup>130</sup> *Samaṇo khalu bho Gotamo uccā,kulā pabbajito asambhinna,khattiya,kulā.* Cf quality (1). Be Ce Se all have *asambhinna-* (“unmixed, unadulterated”), while Ee has *ādīna-*, which clearly is wr. See M:H 2:357 n6. But *ādīna,-khattiya,kula* appear at D 4/1:115,32 (see D:RD 1:148 n2). Cf *ādīna,manaso* (S 5:74; S:W 5:61 n5).

(12) Indeed, sirs, the recluse Gotama is one gone forth from a prosperous family of great wealth and means.<sup>131</sup>

That being the case, it is indeed worthy of me to go and see master Gotama instead.

(13) Indeed, sirs, people from across the country, from across the districts, come to ask questions of the recluse Gotama.

That being the case, it is indeed worthy of me to go and see master Gotama instead.

(14) Indeed, sirs, many thousands of celestial beings [devas] have gone for refuge in the recluse Gotama for life.

That being the case, it is indeed worthy of me to go and see master Gotama instead.

(15) Indeed, sirs, about the recluse Gotama a good report has been going around thus:<sup>132</sup>

‘The Blessed One is an arhat, fully self-awakened, accomplished in wisdom and conduct, well-farer, knower of worlds, peerless guide of tamable people, teacher of gods and humans, awakened, blessed.

Having realized by his own direct knowledge this world with its gods, its Māras and its Brahmās, this generation with its recluses and brahmins, its rulers and people, he makes it known to others.

He teaches the Dharma, good in the beginning, good in the middle, good in the end, both in the spirit and in the letter.

He proclaims the holy life that is entirely complete and pure.’

That being the case, it is indeed worthy of me to go and see master Gotama instead.

(16) Indeed, sirs, the recluse Gotama is endowed with the thirty-two marks of the great man.<sup>133</sup>

That being the case, it is indeed worthy of me to go and see master Gotama instead.<sup>134</sup>

(17) Indeed, sirs, the rajah of Magadha, Seniya Bimbisāra, together with his wife and children [sons and women]<sup>135</sup> have gone to the recluse Gotama as refuge for life.

(18) Indeed, sirs, rajah Pasenadi of Kosala, together with his wife and children [sons and women]<sup>136</sup> have gone to the recluse Gotama as refuge for life.

That being the case, it is indeed worthy of me to go and see master Gotama instead.

(19) Indeed, sirs, the brahmin Pokkhara, sātī, together with his son, his wife, his retinue, and his household,<sup>137</sup> have gone to the recluse Gotama as refuge for life.

That being the case, it is indeed worthy of me to go and see master Gotama instead.<sup>138</sup>

<sup>131</sup> This is similar to quality (3).

<sup>132</sup> For an explanation of the key points of this passage, see SD 35.4 Comy Notes 1c.

<sup>133</sup> For the 32 marks of the great man, see *Buddhānussati* = SD 15.7(4.1)n.

<sup>134</sup> Foll this, **Kūṭa,danta S** (D 5) adds: “Indeed, sirs, the recluse Gotama is one who bids all welcome, congenial, courteous, never frowning, approachable, the first to greet others [the first to speak]” (*Samaṇo khalu bho gotamo ehi,sāgata,vādī sakhilo sammodako abbhā,kuṭiko uttāna,mukho pubba,bhāsī*) (D 5.7(18)/1:132 = 22.8), and a further 4 qualities: that the Buddha is honoured by the fourfold company, that many gods and humans have faith in him, that “near whichever village or market-town that the recluse Gotama resides, non-humans do not trouble the humans therein,” and that he is a leading teacher.

<sup>135</sup> *Rājā māgadho Seniyō Bimbisāro sa,putta,dāro.* **Kūṭa,danta S** (D 5) has “the rajah of Magadha, Seniya Bimbisāra, together with his son, his wife, his court, and his household” (*rājā Māgadho Seniyō Bimbisāro sa,putto sa,bhariyo sa,pariso s’āmacco*) (D 5.7(23)/1:133) = SD 22.8.

<sup>136</sup> *Rājā Pasenadi Kosalo sa,putta,dāro.* **Kūṭa,danta S** (D 5) has “the rajah Pasenadi of Kosala, together with his son, his wife, his court, and his household” (*rājā Pasenadi Kosalo sa,putto sa,bhariyo sa,pariso s’āmacco*) (D 5.7(24)/1:133) = SD 22.8.

<sup>137</sup> **Kūṭa,danta S** (D 5) has “the brahmin Pokkhara,sātī, together with his son, his wife, his retinue, and his household” (*brāhmaṇo Pokkhara,sāti sa,putto sa,bhariyo sa,pariso s’āmacco*) (D 5.7(25)/1:133) = SD 22.8. Pokkhara,sātī is the most prominent brahmin of Ukkatthā, a brahmadeya given to him by king Pasenadi of Kosala. **The Ambaṭṭha S** (D 3) records how, after listening to the Buddha, he becomes a streamwinner, and along with his family and retinue he goes for refuge (D 3.2.21/1:110) = SD 23.1.

<sup>138</sup> Foll this, **Kūṭa,danta S** (D 5) adds (repeats) 3 more statements: that the Buddha is highly honoured by (1) Bimbisāra, (2) by Pasenadi, and (3) by Pokkhara,sātī.

**9b** Indeed, sirs, the recluse Gotama has arrived at Opasāda: he is staying in a sal grove in the Deva Forest, north of Opasāda.

Now, whatever recluses or brahmins who have come within our village boundaries, they are our guests. Indeed, we should honour, respect, hold in high esteem, venerate and revere our guests.

As the recluse Gotama has arrived at Opasāda— he is staying in a sal grove in the Deva Forest, north of Opasāda—the recluse Gotama is to be honoured, respected, held in high esteem, venerated and revered as our guest. [168]

That being the case, it is indeed worthy of *us* to go and see the recluse Gotama instead.<sup>139</sup>

Only that much, sirs, do I know of master Gotama's praises. But, sirs, these are not all of them; for, master Gotama's praise is beyond measure."<sup>140</sup>

Since master Gotama is endowed with every one of these factors, it is not worthy of master Gotama to come and see us. Rather, it is *us* who are worthy to go and see the recluse Gotama!"

"Then, sir, let us all go and see master Gotama!"

Then the brahmin Caṅkī together with a large group of brahmins approached the Blessed One.

### Kāpaṭhika Māṇava

**10** Having approached the Blessed One, he exchanged greetings with him. When this courteous and friendly exchange was concluded, he sat down at one side.

Now at that time, the Blessed One was seated, having a courteous and friendly exchange of words with some elderly brahmins.

**11** At that time, sitting in the assembly was a young brahmin, Kāpaṭhika Māṇava,<sup>141</sup> shaven-headed, sixteen years of age,<sup>142</sup> a master of the Three Vedas, along with their invocations and rituals, phonology and etymology, and the Iti,hāsa Purāṇas<sup>143</sup> as the fifth; learned in the Vedic padas,<sup>144</sup> a grammarian,<sup>145</sup> and well versed in the Lokāyata [nature-lore]<sup>146</sup> and the marks of the great man.<sup>147</sup>

While the elderly brahmins were in the midst of consulting the Blessed One, he kept interrupting the conversation.<sup>148</sup>

Then the Blessed One dismissed Kāpaṭhika Māṇava, saying:

"Let the venerable Bhāradvāja not interrupt the elderly brahmins who are in the midst of consultation. Let the venerable Bhāradvāja wait until the end of the conversation."

When this was said, the brahmin Caṅkī said this to the Blessed One:

"Let master Gotama not dismiss Kāpaṭhika Māṇava. Kāpaṭhika Māṇava is a son of family, Kāpaṭhika Māṇava is deeply learned, Kāpaṭhika Māṇava is one with a fine voice [the instrument of the Good

<sup>139</sup> *Atha kho mayam eva arahāma taṃ bhavantaṃ Gotamaṃ dassanāya upasaṅkhamituṃ*

<sup>140</sup> This is an example of hyperbolic language: see **Kūṭa,danta S** (D 5.7b/1:133) = SD Intro 2.2.

<sup>141</sup> Be Ce Ee *Kāpaṭhiko*; Ke Se *Kāpadiko*. See Intro (2).

<sup>142</sup> "Sixteen years of age," *soḷasa,vass'uddesiko jātiyā*; cf *soḷasika,vass'uddesika,bhava* (J 1:456,6; DhA 3:116,8).

<sup>143</sup> Iti,hāsa Purāṇas are the oral tradition of brahminical legends of kings and sages.

<sup>144</sup> *Padako veyyākaraṇo*, ie, well versed in the *pada,pāṭha* of Sanskrit grammar. Technically, this refers to the *pada* (or literal, word for word) method of reciting (or writing) Veda sentences, ie, "a method of arranging each word of a Vedic text separately in its original form [cf *pada*] without regard to the rules of [sandhi]; cf *krama-* and *samhitā-pāṭha*." (SED). By itself, *pada* can here be translated as "word or word structure."

<sup>145</sup> On *veyyākaraṇa*, see BHSD: sv *vyākaraṇa*, = *vaiyākaraṇa* (p517).

<sup>146</sup> *Lokāyata*. This seems to be the early meaning of the term. Its reference of the materialistic philosophy of Cārvāka is apparently later: see Rhys Davids, D:RD 1:166-172. See **Lokāyatikā Brāhmaṇā S** (A 9.38/4:428-432) = SD 35.15. See also Jayatilleke 1963:48-58 (§§55-67).

<sup>147</sup> For details, see **Buddhānussati** = SD 15.7(4.1)n.

<sup>148</sup> *So vuddhānaṃ brāhmaṇānaṃ bhagavatā saddhiṃ mantayamānānaṃ antar'antarā kathaṃ opāṭeti*. See Intro (2.1).



Word],<sup>149</sup> Kāpaṭhika Māṇava is wise, and Kāpaṭhika Māṇava is capable of discoursing with master Gotama.<sup>150</sup>

**12a** Then it occurred to the Blessed One:

“Surely, [169] it is because of Kāpaṭhika Māṇava’s accomplishment in the texts of the Three Vedas that the brahmins honour him [give him such priority].”<sup>151</sup>

Then it occurred to Kāpaṭhika Māṇava:

“When the ascetic Gotama catches my eye, then I will ask the ascetic Gotama a question.”<sup>152</sup>

Then, the Blessed One, knowing, with his own mind, the thought in Kāpaṭhika Māṇava’s mind, let his eye meet Kāpaṭhika Māṇava’s eye.

Then it occurred to Kāpaṭhika Māṇava:

“The ascetic Gotama is directing his attention to me.<sup>153</sup> What now if I were to ask the ascetic Gotama a question?”

### Kāpaṭhika Māṇava’s question

**12b** THE BRAHMINS’ STRONG VIEW. Then Kāpaṭhika Māṇava said this to the Blessed One:

“Master Gotama, **concerning the ancient Vedic mantras<sup>154</sup> that have been handed down through a lineage of oral transmission, and in the canon of texts, the brahmins make the categorical conclusion that only this is true; all else is false.** What does the ascetic Gotama say here?”<sup>155</sup>

**13a** (1) “But, Bhāra,dvāja, is there a single brahmin amongst these who says thus:

‘I know this, I see this:<sup>156</sup> only this is true, everything else is false!’?”<sup>157</sup>

“No, indeed, master Gotama.”

**13b** (2) “What then, Bhāra,dvāja, is there a single brahmin amongst those who are teachers of teachers, going back over seven generations of teachers [of the teacher], who says thus:

‘I know this, I see this: only this is true, everything else is false!’?”

“No, indeed, master Gotama.”

**13c** (3) “What then, Bhāra,dvāja, about the ancient seers [rishis] of the brahmins, mantra makers, mantra preachers—that is to say, Aṣṭaka, Vāmaka, Vāma,deva, Viśvā,mitra, Jamad-agni, Aṅgi,rasa, Bhāra,dvāja, Vāsiṣṭha, Kaśyapa, and Bhagu<sup>158</sup>—whose ancient mantras and verses are chanted, uttered

<sup>149</sup> *Kalyāṇa,vāk,kaṇo*. The “Good Word” (*kalyāṇa,vāk*) here refers to the Three Vedas and brahminical mantras. This is however is conjectural, but this sense is probable if the text is a late one.

<sup>150</sup> *Kula,putto ca Kāpaṭhiko māṇavo, kulaputto ca Kāpaṭhiko māṇavo, bahussuto ca Kāpaṭhiko māṇavo, kalyāṇa,vāk,kaṇo ca Kāpaṭhiko māṇavo, paṇḍito ca Kāpaṭhiko māṇavo, pahoti ca Kāpaṭhiko māṇavo, bhotā Gotamena saddhim asmiṃ vacane paṭimantetun ti*. This is stock: D 3.1.17/1:93 (Māṇava Ambaṭṭha, of himself), D 4.18/1:122 (the Buddha, of Soṇa,danḍa); M 95.11/2:168 (the brahmin Caṅkī, of Māṇava Kāpaṭhika).

<sup>151</sup> *Atha kho bhagavato etad ahoṣi, “addhā kho Kāpaṭikassa Māṇavassa tevijjake pāvācane kataṃ bhavissati.”*

<sup>152</sup> *Yadā me samaṇo Gotamo cakkhunā cakkhuṃ upasaṃharissati, athāhaṃ samaṇaṃ Gotamaṃ pañhaṃ pucchissāmi ti.*

<sup>153</sup> *Samannāharati kho maṃ samaṇo Gotamo.*

<sup>154</sup> *Manta,pada*. Comy: Both *manta* and *manta,pada* refer to the Vedas (MA 3:424).

<sup>155</sup> *Yam idaṃ bho Gotama, brāhmaṇānaṃ porāṇānaṃ manta,padam itih’itiha,paramparāya,piṭaka.sampadāya, tattha ca brāhmaṇā ekamsena nitthaṃ gacchanti, “Idam eva saccam mogham aññaṃ ti.” Idha bhavaṃ Gotamo kim āhā ti.*

<sup>156</sup> *Aham etaṃ jānāmi, aham etaṃ passāmi*. The meaning of this question is whether is what he claims as truth is not from personal direct experience (*abhiñña*), then it is only an opinion, and anyone is entitled to an opinion. An opinion is not necessarily true. That such beliefs as the God-idea is the only truth simply fails on this premiss alone.

<sup>157</sup> The brief statement and the foll 2 are elaborated in **Te,vijja S** (D 13.12-29/1:238-246) = SD 1.8.

<sup>158</sup> See **Te,vijja S** (D 13/1:235-252) = SD 1.8 Intro (2.1). See also V 1:245; D 1:104, 238, 242; A 3:224, 229; M 2:200. For identification of these seers’ names, see *Vinaya Texts* (tr Rhys Davids & Oldenberg) 2:130 n3 & V:H 4:337 nn5-9.

and collected by the brahmins of today, who sing them and recite them, and having sung them make others sing them, having recited them make others recite them:<sup>159</sup>

Do they, too, say, ‘I know this, I see this: only this is true, everything else is false!’?’ [170]  
“No, indeed, master Gotama.”

**13d** THE BRAHMIN’S VIEW IS NOT DIRECT EXPERIENCE. “So, Bhāra,dvāja, it appears that there is not a single brahmin amongst them who says thus: ‘I know this, I see this:<sup>160</sup> only this is true, everything else is false!’

There is not a single brahmin amongst those who are teachers of teachers, going back over seven generations of teachers [of the teacher], who says thus: ‘I know this, I see this: only this is true, everything else is false!’

Even the ancient seers [rishis] of the brahmins, mantra makers, mantra preachers—that is to say, Aṣṭaka, Vāmaka, Vāma,deva, Viśvā,mitra, Jamad-agni, Aṅgi,rasa, Bhāra,dvāja, Vāsiṣṭha, Kaśyapa, and Bhagu—whose ancient mantras and verses are chanted, uttered and collected by the brahmins of today, who sing them and recite them, and having sung them make others sing them, having recited them make others recite them:<sup>161</sup>

They, too, did not say thus, ‘I know this, I see this: only this is true, everything else is false!’

**13e** THE BLIND LEADING THE BLIND. Just as a file of blind men, Bhāra,dvāja, one clinging to the other: the first one sees nothing, the middle one sees nothing, and the last one sees nothing<sup>162</sup>—so it is with the talk of these brahmins, for certain,<sup>163</sup> like the file of blind men holding onto the line, one clinging to the other: the first one sees nothing, the middle one sees nothing, the last one sees nothing.

What do you think, Bhāra,dvāja, such being the case, does not the talk of these brahmins amount to blind faith?’<sup>164</sup>

### The five grounds for views

**14a** “But, master Gotama, the brahmins do not venerate<sup>165</sup> (the Vedic texts) by faith alone here, they also go by repeated hearing [oral tradition or revelation] here.”<sup>166</sup>

<sup>159</sup> “The ancient seers...make others recite them,”...[tevijjānaṃ]\* brāhmaṇānaṃ pubbakā isayo mantānaṃ kattāro mantānaṃ pavattāro, yesam idaṃ etarahi brāhmaṇā porānaṃ manta,padaṃ gītaṃ pavuttaṃ samihitaṃ, tad anugāyanti tad anubhāsanti, bhāsitaṃ anubhāsanti vācītaṃ anuvācenti, seyyath’idaṃ—Aṭṭhako Vāmako Vāma,devo Vessā,mitto Yama-t-aggi [Ke Yama-d-aggi] Aṅgīraso Bhāra,dvājo Vāseṭṭho Kassapo Bhagu [\* only at D 13.13]: this is stock: Mv 35.2 = V 1:245; **Ambaṭṭha S** (D 3.2.8/1:104); **Tevijja S** (D 13.2.13/1:238 f, 13.2.18/1:241, 242, 243); **Caṅkī S** (M 95.13/2:169 f), **Subha S** (M 99.9/2:200); **Doṇa S** (A 5.192/3:223 f, 3:229 f), (**Sāriputta**) **Dāna S** (A 7.49/4:61). For identification of the seers’ names, see *Vinaya Texts* (tr Rhys Davids & Oldenberg) 2:130 n3 & V:H 4:337 nn5-9.

<sup>160</sup> *Aham etaṃ jānāmi, aham etaṃ passāmi.* The meaning of this question is whether is what he claims as truth is not from personal direct experience (*abhiñña*), then it is only an opinion, and anyone is entitled to an opinion. An opinion is not necessarily true. That such beliefs as the God-idea is the only truth simply fails on this premiss alone.

<sup>161</sup> “The ancient seers...make others recite them,”...[tevijjānaṃ, D 13.13] brāhmaṇānaṃ pubbakā isayo mantānaṃ kattāro mantānaṃ pavattāro, yesam idaṃ etarahi brāhmaṇā porānaṃ manta,padaṃ gītaṃ pavuttaṃ samhitam, tad anugāyanti tad anubhāsanti, bhāsitaṃ anubhāsanti vācītaṃ anuvācenti, seyyath’idaṃ—Aṭṭhako Vāmako Vāma,devo Vessā,mitto Yama-t-aggi [Ke Yama-d-aggi] Aṅgīraso Bhāra,dvājo Vāseṭṭho Kassapo Bhagu: this is stock: Mv 35.2 = V 1:245; **Ambaṭṭha S** (D 3.2.8/1:104); **Tevijja S** (D 13.2.13/1:238 f, 13.2.18/1:241, 242, 243); **Caṅkī S** (M 95.13/2:169 f), **Subha S** (M 99.9/2:200); **Doṇa S** (A 5.192/3:223 f, 3:229 f), (**Sāriputta**) **Dāna S** (A 7.49/4:61). For identification of the seers’ names, see *Vinaya Texts* (tr Rhys Davids & Oldenberg) 2:130 n3 & V:H 4:337 nn5-9.

<sup>162</sup> *Seyyāthapi Bhāra,dvāja, andha,veṇi paramparā,saṃsattā, purimo pi na passati majjhimo pi na passati pacchimo pi na passati.* This well known parable is found in **Te,vijja S** (D 13.15/1:239); **Caṅkī S** (M 95.13e/2:170), (**Brahma,vihāra**) **Subha S** (M 99.9/2:200). An even better known parable is that of the blind men and the elephant (U 68): see Jayatilke 1963:354 f, 378 f.

<sup>163</sup> “For certain,” *maññe*.

<sup>164</sup> For a more elaborate version of this passage, see **Te,vijja S** (D 13.15/1:239 f) = SD 1.8.

<sup>165</sup> “Venerate,” *payirupāsanti* (pl), *payirupāsati*, “he attends on (acc), honours, pays homage,worship” (D 1:47, 2:257; M 2:117; S 1:146; A 1:124, 126, 142, 4:337; Dh 64, 65; Tha 1236; J 6:222 (PED); def as *punappunam upa-saṅkamati* (VbhA 457); from *pari-upa √ās*, “to sit” (with metathesis as in *payirudāharati*) (Geiger 47.2) = Skt *pari-*

“But, Bhāra,dvāja, you went by faith earlier on, but now speak of ‘repeated hearing.’

**14b** There are these five grounds [dharma], Bhāra,dvāja, that may bear two kinds of results right here and now.

What are the five? They are:<sup>167</sup>

- |                                                                                                         |                                      |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| (1) faith                                                                                               | ( <i>saddhā</i> ),                   |
| (2) personal preference                                                                                 | ( <i>ruci</i> ),                     |
| (3) repeated hearing [oral tradition or revelation]                                                     | ( <i>anussava</i> ),                 |
| (4) reasoned thought [specious reasoning]                                                               | ( <i>ākāra,parivītakka</i> ), and    |
| (5) being convinced of a view after pondering over it<br>[conviction to a view after thinking about it] | ( <i>diṭṭhi,nijjhāna-k,khanti</i> ). |

These five things, Bhāra,dvāja, may bear two kinds of results<sup>168</sup> here and now.

(1) Now, Bhāra,dvāja, something may be well accepted *through faith*, but it turns out to be empty, hollow and false; but something else that is not well accepted through faith may be true, real and not otherwise [unmistaken].<sup>169</sup>

(2) Now, Bhāra,dvāja, something may be well accepted *through personal preference*, but it turns out to be empty, hollow and false; but something else that is not well accepted through faith may be true, real and not otherwise [unmistaken].

(3) Now, Bhāra,dvāja, something may be well accepted *through repeated hearing*, but it turns out to be empty, hollow and false; but something else that is not well accepted through faith may be true, real and not otherwise [unmistaken].

(4) Now, [171] Bhāra,dvāja, something may be well accepted *through reasoned thought*, but it turns out to be empty, hollow and false; but something else that is not well accepted through faith may be true, real and not otherwise [unmistaken].

(5) Now, Bhāra,dvāja, something may well be accepted *through being convinced of a view after pondering over it*, but it turns out to be empty, hollow and false; but something else that is not well accepted through faith may be true, real and not otherwise [unmistaken].

As such, Bhāra,dvāja, in terms of preserving truth, it is insufficient [inadequate] here for a wise person to come to the one-sided definite conclusion, saying, ‘Only this is true; everything else is false.’<sup>170</sup>

### Preserving truth without direct knowledge

**15** “In what way, master Gotama, is there a preserving [guarding] of truth (*saccānurakkhanā*)? How does one preserve truth? We ask master Gotama regarding the preservation of truth.”

(1) “If, Bhāra,dvāja, there is *faith* in a person, **he preserves the truth, thinking, ‘Such is my faith.’ But he does not come to the definite conclusion that ‘only this is true, everything else is false.’**<sup>171</sup>

*upatiṣṭhati*, from *pary-upa* + √*STHA*, “to stand” (SED); but there is (Skt) *pary-ud* √*AS* → *paryudasyati*, “he rejects, excludes,” but does not seem to apply here. Here, I think IB Horner (M:H 2:360) gives the best rendition, which I follow.

<sup>166</sup> *Na kho ’ttha [khv-ettha] bho Gotama, brāhmaṇā saddhāy’eva payirupāsanti, anussavā p’ettha brāhmaṇā payirupāsanti ti.*

<sup>167</sup> See Intro (3).

<sup>168</sup> That is, (1) it may be fully accepted through faith, etc, “yet it may be hollow, empty, false (*rittaṃ tuccham musā*),” but (2) something else may not be fully accepted through faith, etc, “yet it may be true, real, unmistaken (*bhūtaṃ tacchaṃ anaññathā*):” see (**Musīla**) **Kosambī S** (S 12.68/2:115-118), and **Atthi Nu Kho Pariyāya S** (S 35.153/4:138-140).

<sup>169</sup> *Api ca Bhāra,dvāja, susaddahitaṃ yeva hoti, tañ ca hoti rittaṃ tuccham musā, no ce pi susaddahitaṃ hoti, bhūtaṃ tacchaṃ anaññathā.*

<sup>170</sup> *Saccam anurakkhatā Bhāradvāja viññunā purisena nālam ettha ekamsena niṭṭham gantum “idam eva saccam mogham aññan ti.* Bodhi: “It is not proper for him to come to this conclusion because he has not personally ascertained the truth of his conviction but only accepts it on a ground that is not capable of yielding certainty.” (M:NB 1300 n884)

<sup>171</sup> This is a key passage, the first of five. The import here is that everyone is entitled to an opinion or his view, especially religious ones, but to proclaim that everyone else must adhere to one’s opinion or view does not “preserve

To this extent, Bhāra,dvāja, there is the preserving of truth. To this extent, he preserves truth. To this extent, we declare preserving of the truth.

But there is as yet no discovering the truth (*saccānubodha*).

(2) If, Bhāra,dvāja, there is *personal preference* in a person, he preserves the truth, thinking, ‘Such is my personal preference.’ But he does not come to the definite conclusion that ‘only this is true, everything else is false.’

To this extent, Bhāra,dvāja, there is the preserving of truth. To this extent, he preserves truth. To this extent, we declare preserving of the truth.

But there is as yet no discovering to the truth.

(3) If, Bhāra,dvāja, there is *repeated hearing* in a person, he preserves the truth, thinking, ‘Such is my repeated hearing.’ But he does not come to the definite conclusion that ‘only this is true, everything else is false.’

To this extent, Bhāra,dvāja, there is the preserving of truth. To this extent, he preserves truth. To this extent, we declare preserving of the truth.

(4) If, Bhāra,dvāja, there is *reasoned thought* [specious reasoning] in a person, he preserves the truth, thinking, ‘Such is my reasoned thought.’ But he does not come to the definite conclusion that ‘only this is true, everything else is false.’

To this extent, Bhāra,dvāja, there is the preserving of truth. To this extent, he preserves truth. To this extent, we declare preserving of the truth.

(5) If, Bhāra,dvāja, there is in a person *conviction to a view after pondering on it*, he preserves the truth, thinking, ‘Such is my personal preference.’ But he does not come to the definite conclusion that ‘only this is true, everything else is false.’

To this extent, Bhāra,dvāja, there is the preserving of truth. To this extent, one preserves truth. To this extent, we declare the preserving of the truth.”

**16a** “To this extent, master Gotama, there is the preserving of truth. To this extent, one preserves truth. To this extent, we see the preserving of the truth.

### The investigation (*samannesanā*) passage

**16b** But, master Gotama, in what way is there **the discovering of truth (*saccānubodha*)**?<sup>172</sup> In what way does one discover the truth? We ask master Gotama regarding the discovery of the truth.”

**17** “Here, Bhāra,dvāja, a monk lives in dependence on a certain village or market town. Then a householder or a householder’s son approaches him and examines<sup>173</sup> him concerning three things, **[172]** that is, regarding states of greed, regarding states of hate, regarding states of delusion, thus:<sup>174</sup>

(1) ‘Are there in this venerable one *any state of greed* such that, with his mind seized by these states, while not knowing, he would say, “I know,” while not seeing, he would say, “I see,” or he might urge others to act in a way that would lead to their harm and suffering for a long time?’

On examining him, he knows (*jānāti*), thus:<sup>175</sup>

‘There in this venerable one no such state of greed such that, with his mind seized by those states, while not knowing, he says, “I know,” while not seeing, he might say, “I see,” or he might urge others to act in a way that would lead to their harm and suffering for a long time.’

It is such that the venerable one’s bodily conduct and verbal conduct are not those of one who is greedy.

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(or guard) the truth.” As long as we do not have a direct personal experience of those opinions or views, they would turn out to be *either* true or false. This is the most important rationale for religious tolerance and interfaith dialogue.

<sup>172</sup> Or, “awakening to the truth.”

<sup>173</sup> *Samannesati*, “he examines,” which is the key word in this section.

<sup>174</sup> This method of investigation clearly elaborates on that taught in **Vīmaṃsaka S** (M 47.4/1:318), but which covers a broader area regarding the purpose of learning the Dharma. See **Jaṭṭila S** (S 3.11/1:77-79 = SD 14.11) and **Ṭhānāni S** (A 4.19/2:187-190 = SD 14.12).

<sup>175</sup> Cf def in **Sāleyyaka S** (M 41.9/1:286) = SD 5.7.

The Dharma that the venerable one teaches is deep, hard to see, hard to understand, peaceful, sublime, beyond mere reasoning, subtle, to be experienced by the wise. This Dharma cannot easily be taught by one who is *greedy*.

18 To the extent of examining him, he examines (*samannesati*) whether he is purified of states of greed, to that same extent he further examines for states of hate, thus:

(2) ‘Are there in this venerable one *any state of hate* such that, with his mind seized by these states, while not knowing, he say, “I know,” while not seeing, he might say, “I see,” or he might urge others to act in a way that would lead to their harm and suffering for a long time?’

On examining him, he knows (*jānāti*), thus:

‘There in this venerable one no such state of hate such that, with his mind seized by those states, while not knowing, he say, “I know,” while not seeing, he might say, “I see,” or he might urge others to act in a way that would lead to their harm and suffering for a long time.’

It is such that the venerable one’s bodily conduct and verbal conduct are not those of one who is hateful.

The Dharma that the venerable one teaches is deep, hard to see, hard to understand, peaceful, sublime, beyond mere reasoning, subtle, to be experienced by the wise. This Dharma cannot easily be taught by one who is *hateful*.

19 To the extent of examining him, he examines (*samannesati*) that he is purified of states of hate, [173] to that same extent he further examines for states of delusion, thus:

(3) ‘Are there in this venerable one *any state of delusion* such that, with his mind seized by these states, while not knowing, he say, “I know,” while not seeing, he might say, “I see,” or he might urge others to act in a way that would lead to their harm and suffering for a long time?’

On examining him, he knows (*jānāti*), thus:

‘There in this venerable one no such state of delusion such that, with his mind seized by those states, while not knowing, he say, “I know,” while not seeing, he might say, “I see,” or he might urge others to act in a way that would lead to their harm and suffering for a long time.’

It is such that the venerable one’s bodily conduct and verbal conduct are not those of one who is deluded.

The Dharma that the venerable one teaches is deep, hard to see, hard to understand, peaceful, sublime, beyond mere reasoning, subtle, to be experienced by the wise. This Dharma cannot easily be taught by one who is *deluded*.

### Discovering the truth: the gradual training

20 To the extent of examining (*samannesamāno*)<sup>176</sup> him, he observes (*samanupassati*) that he is purified of states of delusion, he thus puts faith in him.<sup>177</sup>

- |                                                                                           |                                       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| (1) Out of faith, <u>he approaches</u> him                                                | ( <i>upasaṅkamati</i> ).              |
| (2) Having approached, <u>he respectfully draws close to him</u> <sup>178</sup>           | ( <i>payirūpāsati</i> ).              |
| (3) Having respectfully drawn close to him, <u>he lends his ear</u> <sup>179</sup>        | ( <i>sotaṃ odahati</i> ).             |
| (4) Having lent his ear, <u>he listens to the Dharma</u>                                  | ( <i>dhammaṃ suṇāti</i> ).            |
| (5) Having heard the Dharma [teachings], <u>he remembers the Dharma</u>                   | ( <i>dhammaṃ dhāreti</i> ).           |
| (6) Having remembered the Dharma, <u>he investigates their meaning</u>                    | ( <i>atthaṃ upaparikkhati</i> ).      |
| (7) Having investigated their meaning, <u>he reflectively accepts them</u> <sup>180</sup> | ( <i>dhammā nijjhānaṃ khamanti</i> ). |

<sup>176</sup> See Intro (1.3.2).

<sup>177</sup> *Yato naṃ samannesamāno visuddhaṃ mohaṇīyehi dhammehi samanupassati*. These 12 stages of learning are reversed in §§21b-33, in response to Kāpaṭhika’s question. On *samannesanā*, see Intro (1.3.2).

<sup>178</sup> See “venerate” at §14a n & Intro (5(3) n).

<sup>179</sup> See Intro (5(4) n).

<sup>180</sup> *Nijjhānaṃ khamanti*, lit “insights are endured,” ie “capable of bearing insights”; idiomatic meaning “he is pleased with, approves of, finds pleasure in” (M 1:133 f; 479 f, 2:173, 175; S 3:225, 228, 5:377, 379; Vv 84.17). *Khanti* usually means “patience” but here it means “choice, receptivity, preference, acceptance.” The BHSD defines *kṣānti* as “intellectual receptivity; the being ready in advance to accept knowledge.” *Khanti* is often used in the

- (8) Having reflectively accepted them, desire<sup>181</sup> for mindfulness arises (*sati chando jāyati*).  
 (9) Having desire for mindfulness, he exerts himself (*ussahati*).<sup>182</sup>  
 (10) Exerting himself, he weighs [harmonizes] it (*tulayati*).<sup>183</sup>  
 (11) Having weighed it, he strives (*padahati*).<sup>184</sup>  
 (12) With a striving mind, he realizes the ultimate truth with his own body, he sees it (true reality) by penetrating it with wisdom (*sacchikaroti*).<sup>185</sup>

To this extent,<sup>186</sup> Bhāra,dvāja, there is the preserving of truth. To this extent, one preserves truth. To this extent, we declare the preserving of the truth. But there is as yet no attaining to the truth.<sup>187</sup>

**21a** “To this extent, master Gotama, there is the discovering of truth. To this extent, one discovers truth. To this extent, we see the discovering of the truth.”<sup>188</sup>

### Attaining to the truth: the 12-step training

**21b** But, master Gotama, is there the attaining [awakening] to the truth (*saccānuppatti*)? In what way does one attain to the truth? We ask master Gotama regarding the attaining to the truth.” [174]

“Indeed, Bhāra,dvāja, the attaining to the truth lies in these very associating with the Dharma and working hard at cultivating it. Bhāra,dvāja, to what extent there is the attaining to the truth, to that extent one has realized the truth, and to that extent we declare the attainment to the truth.”

**22** “Master Gotama, the attaining to the truth lies in these very associating with the Dharma and working at cultivating it. Master Gotama, to what extent there is the attaining to the truth, to that extent one has realized the truth, and to that extent we declare the attainment to the truth.

But what, master Gotama, is very helpful for the attaining to the truth? We ask master Gotama about **the dharma that is very helpful for the attaining to the truth.**”

Canon in this latter sense (see SD 12.13(2a) for refs). The phrase can also be freely rendered as “receptivity in harmony with true reality.” See **Kālāma S** (A 3.65.3a(8)/1:189) = SD 35.4 comy 3a(8). On *khanti* as “mental receptivity,” see **Aniccā S** (A 6.98) = SD 12.13(3).

<sup>181</sup> Also *will* or *will-power* in the simple psychological sense, without any philosophical connotation.

<sup>182</sup> **Bodhi:** “Although applying the will (*ussahati*) appears similar to striving (*padahati*), the former may be understood as the exertion undertaken prior to insight contemplation, the latter as the exertion that brings insight up to the level of the supramundane path.” (M:ÑB 1300 n890)

<sup>183</sup> Comy: He investigates (*tīreti*) states in terms of impermanence, etc (MA 3:426). *Tīreti* (caus of *tarati*, meaning (1) to cross over, or (2) to be in a hurry), meaning (1) to bring through, finish, execute (a business), to accomplish; (2) to measure, judge, recognize, always in formula *tuleti tīreti vibhāveti* [“Nc,” says PED, but unattested] (cf J 5:48), as interpretation of *jānāti* (PED). However, if we look at the progression of the method here, what clearly follows is the balancing of the practice in terms of the faculties (*indriya*): see **Āpaṇa S** (S 48.50/5:225 f) = SD 10.4. However, in Buddhaghosa’s def of *tīraṇa,pariññā*, he says, “having known this, that is, investigating the 5 aggregates in their 42 aspects as being impermanent, suffering, a disease, etc” (*evaṃ ñatam katvā pañcakkhandhe tīreti aniccato dukkhato rogato ti dvā,cattālīsāya ākārehi*) (SA 1:45), in which case, this would be “insight contemplation” (as noted by Bodhi, M:ÑB 1300 n889).

<sup>184</sup> **Bodhi:** “Although applying the will (*ussahati*) appears similar to striving (*padahati*), the former may be understood as the exertion undertaken prior to insight contemplation, the latter as the exertion that brings insight up to the level of the supramundane path.” (S:B 1300 n890)

<sup>185</sup> *Pahit’attato samāno kāyena c’eva parama,saccaṃ sacchikaroti, paññāya ca nam ativijjha passati*. Comy: He realizes nirvana with the conascent mental body (*saha,jāta,nāma.kāya*) (of the streamwinning path), and having penetrated the defilements with wisdom, he sees it (nirvana) clearly and manifestly. (MA 3:426 f)

<sup>186</sup> See **Kiṭṭagiri S** (M 70) where this 12-step training is mentioned, and rebuking the indisciplined monks, the Buddha tell them that this training is not found in them (M 70.22-24/1:479 f) = SD 11.1.

<sup>187</sup> *Na tv-eva saccānuppatti hotī ti*. This statement—that there is *no* awakening at this stage—is obvious because the listeners (Kāpaṭhika and the brahmins) are not yet practitioners. Technically, we can say (as at M:ÑB 1301 n892) that this stage of “discovering the truth” refers streamwinning, while “the attaining of the truth” (*saccānuppatti*) [§21b] then refers to the attainment of arhatood.

<sup>188</sup> “The discovering of the truth [the awakening to the truth]” here refers to streamwinning. This section concludes “The *samannesanā* passage,” which starts at §16

(12)<sup>189</sup> “Striving (*padhāna*), Bhāra,dvāja, is very helpful for the attaining to the truth. If one does not strive, there is no attaining to the truth. And as you strive, so you attain to the truth. Therefore, striving is very helpful for the attaining to the truth.”

23 “But, master Gotama, what dharma is very helpful for striving? We ask master Gotama regarding the dharma that is very helpful for striving.”

(11) “Weighing [balancing the practice] (*tulana*), Bhāra,dvāja, is very helpful for striving. If one does not weigh, there is no striving. And as you weigh, so you strive. Therefore, weighing is very helpful for striving.”

24 “But, master Gotama, what dharma is very helpful for weighing? We ask master Gotama regarding the dharma that is very helpful for weighing.”

(10) “Exertion (*ussaha*), Bhāra,dvāja, is very helpful for weighing. If one does not exert, there is no weighing. And as you exert, so you weigh. Therefore, exertion is very helpful for weighing.”

25 “But, master Gotama, what dharma is very helpful for exertion? We ask master Gotama regarding the dharma that is very helpful for exerting.”

(9) “Desire [will-power] (*chanda*), Bhāra,dvāja, is very helpful for exerting. [175] If one has no desire [no will-power], there is no exertion. And as you desire [will], so you exert. Therefore, desire is very helpful for exerting.”

26 “But, master Gotama, what dharma is very helpful for desire [will-power]? We ask master Gotama regarding the dharma that is very helpful for desire.”

(8) “Reflective acceptance of teachings (*dhamma,nijjhāna,khanti*), Bhāra,dvāja, is very helpful for desire [the will]. If one has no reflective acceptance of teachings, there is no desire. And as you reflectively accept teachings, so you desire. Therefore, reflective acceptance of teachings is very helpful for desire.”

27 “But, master Gotama, what dharma is very helpful for reflective acceptance of teachings? We ask master Gotama regarding the dharma that is very helpful for the reflective acceptance of teachings.”

(7) “Investigating the meaning (*atth'upaparikkha*), Bhāra,dvāja, is very helpful for reflectively accepting teachings. If one does not investigate the meaning, there is no reflective acceptance of teachings. And as you investigate the meaning, so you reflectively accept teaching. Therefore, investigating the meaning is very helpful for the reflective acceptance of teachings.”

28 “But, master Gotama, what dharma is very helpful for investigating the meaning? We ask master Gotama regarding the dharma that is very helpful for investigating the meaning.”

(6) “Remembering the teachings (*dhamma,dhāraṇa*), Bhāra,dvāja, is very helpful for investigating the meaning. If one does not remember the teachings, there is no investigating the meaning. And as you remember the teachings, so you investigate the meaning. Therefore, remembering the teachings is very helpful for investigating the meaning.”

29 “But, master Gotama, what dharma is very helpful for remembering the teachings? We ask master Gotama regarding the dharma that is very helpful for remembering the teachings.”

(5) “Listening to the teachings (*dhamma-s,savana*), Bhāra,dvāja, is very helpful for remembering the teachings. If one does not listen to the teachings, there is no remembering the teachings. And as you listen to the teachings, so you remember the teachings. Therefore, listening to the teachings is very helpful for remembering the teachings.”

30 “But, master Gotama, what dharma is very helpful for listening to the teachings? We ask master Gotama regarding the dharma that is very helpful for listening to the teachings.”

(4) “Lending the ear (*sotāvadhāna*), Bhāra,dvāja, is very helpful for listening to the teachings. If one does not lend the ear, there is no listening to the teachings. And as you lend the ear, so you listen to the teachings. Therefore, lending the ear is very helpful for listening to the teachings.”

31 “But, master Gotama, what dharma is very helpful for lending the ear? We ask master Gotama regarding the dharma that is very helpful for lending the ear.”

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<sup>189</sup> The parenthesized numbering in this section is reversed (in terms of practice) of the teachings of §20. See Intro (5).

(3) “Respectfully drawing near (*payirūpāsana*), Bhāra,dvāja, is very helpful for lending the ear. [176] If one does not respectfully draw near, there is no lending the ear. And as you respectfully draw near, so you lend the ear. Therefore, respectfully drawing near is very helpful for lending the ear.”

32 “But, master Gotama, what dharma is very helpful for respectfully drawing near? We ask master Gotama regarding the dharma that is very helpful for respectfully drawing near.”

(2) “Approaching (*upasankamana*) (the teacher), Bhāra,dvāja, is very helpful for respectfully drawing near. If one does not approach, there is no respectfully drawing near. And as you approach, so you respectfully draw near. Therefore, approaching is very helpful for respectfully drawing near.”

33 “But, master Gotama, what dharma is very helpful for respectfully drawing near? We ask master Gotama regarding the dharma that is very helpful for respectfully drawing near.”

(1) “Faith (*saddhā*), Bhāra,dvāja, is very helpful for approaching. If one has no faith, there is no approaching. And as you have faith, so you approach. Therefore, faith is very helpful for approaching.”

### The brahmins are moved

34a “We asked master Gotama regarding *the preserving of truth*; master Gotama explained the preserving of truth. And we approve of it and accept it [the answer], and so we are satisfied with it.

We ask master Gotama regarding *the discovering of truth*; master Gotama explained the discovering of truth. And we approve of it and accept it, and so we are satisfied with it.

We ask master Gotama regarding *the attaining of truth*; master Gotama explained the attaining of truth. And we approve of it and accept it, and so we are satisfied with it.

We ask master Gotama regarding *the states that are of great help to the attaining of truth*; [177] master Gotama explained the states that are of great help to the attaining of truth. And we approve of it and accept it, and so we are satisfied with it.

Whatever that we asked master Gotama, master Gotama answered just that. And we approve of it and accept it, and so we are satisfied with it.<sup>190</sup>

34b Formerly, master Gotama, we understood thus:

‘Who are these shavelings, little ascetics, menials, blacks, born of the feet of our Kinsman (Mahā Brahmā), that they would be knowers of the Dharma!’<sup>191</sup>

But master Gotama has indeed moved us to have affection for the recluses, faith in the recluses, respect for the recluses!<sup>192</sup>

### The brahmins go for refuge

35 Excellent, Master Gotama! Excellent, Master Gotama!

Just as if one were to place upright what had been overturned,

were to reveal what was hidden,

were to show the way to one who was lost, or

were to hold up a lamp in the dark so that those with eyes could see forms,

<sup>190</sup> Cf a contrary case in **Sāmañña,phala S** (D 2) where Ajāta,sattu claims that the six sectarians do not answer his questions at all, that it is as if “when asked about a mango, were to answer with a breadfruit, or, when asked about a breadfruit, were to answer with a mango” (D 2.16-33/1:52-59) = SD 8.10.

<sup>191</sup> *Mayaṃ hi bho Gotama, pubbe evaṃ jānāma: ke ca mundakā samanākā ibbhā kanhā bandhu,pād’āpaccā, ke ca dhammassa aññātāro ti.* The underscored words are stock—meaning, “shavelings, little [false] ascetics, menials, blacks, born of the feet of the Kinsman (Mahā Brahmā)” —are contemptuous epithets brahmins often use for non-brahmins, esp monks, shudras and outcastes: D 1:90, 103, 3:90; M 1:334; S 4:117. Although Comys generally equate *bandhu* (Kinsman) with Mahā Brahmā (eg DA 1:254), for the brahmins the term actually refers to Puruṣa, the cosmic man, as mentioned in **Puruṣa Sūkta**, hymn 10.90 of the R̥gveda. *Ibbha* is a general contemptuous term for non-brahmins, as the ancient imperial Chinese regarded non-Chinese as “devils,” the Jews regarded others as “gentiles” (Hebrew *goyim*, sg *goy*), or the fundamental Christians regarded non-believers as “heathens.” Cf **Ambaṭṭha S** (D 3.1.10-15/3:90-92) = SD 21.3.

<sup>192</sup> *Ajanesi vata me bhavaṃ Gotamo samañesu samaña,pemaṃ, samañesu samaña,pasādaṃ, samanesu samaña,gāravaṃ.*



in the same way, in numerous ways, has the Dharma been made clear by master Gotama.

We go to master Gotama for refuge, to the Dharma, and to the community of monks. May master Gotama remember us as lay followers who have gone for refuge, from this day forth, for life.”

— evaṃ —

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